DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 475 757 FL 027 654

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TITLE	Maximizing Study Abroad: A Program Professionals' Guide to Strategies for Language and Culture Learning and Use.
INSTITUTION	Minnesota Univ., Minneapolis. Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition.
ISBN	ISBN-0-9722545-1-X
PUB DATE	2002-00-00
NOTE	199p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition, University of Minnesota, 619 Heller Hall, 271-19th Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55455 ($30). Tel: 612-626-0559; Web site: http://www.bookstere.umn.edu/.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom - Teacher (052)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC08 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Cognitive Style; *Consciousness Raising; Coping; *Cultural Awareness; Language Usage; *Learning Strategies; Second Language Learning; Secondary Education; *Study Abroad

ABSTRACT

This guide was written for study abroad program professionals to assist in facilitating students' culture and language learning before, during, and after their time abroad, providing students with tools that will enable them to best navigate, interpret, and learn from their own cross-cultural encounters. Eight sections focus on the following: (1) "Introduction"; (2) "Surveys and Indexes" (Learning Style Survey, Learning Strategy Use Inventory and Index, and Culture-Learning Strategies Inventory and Index); (3) "Students' Language and Culture Learning and Development" (e.g., taking students through the learning curve, assessing the study abroad experience, and recognizing students' levels of intercultural sensitivity); (4) "Culture Learning Strategies" (pre-departure, in-country, and post-study-abroad strategies); (5) "Strategies for Language Learning and Use" (facilitating the use of language learning strategies and re-entry and post-study-abroad language learning); (6) "Orientations and Workshops: Sequencing Suggestions and Time Frames" (e.g., facilitating classes and field trips and preparing students for re-entry); (7) "Activities and Handouts" (e.g., becoming familiar with culture, coping scenario, and reacting to changes); and (8) "Resources for Program Professionals." (SM)

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Program Professionals' Guide

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

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MAXIMIZING STUDY ABROAD

A Program Professionals' Guide to Strategies for Language and Culture Learning and Use

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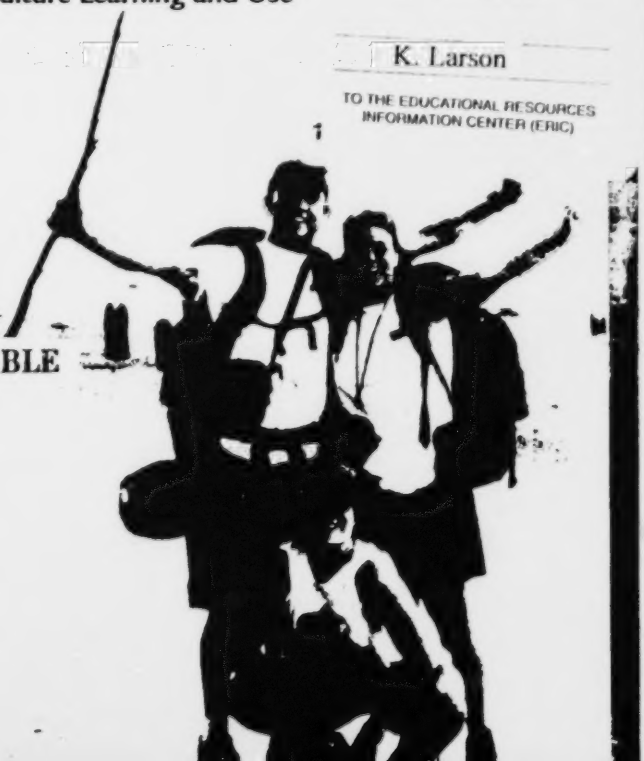

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MAXIMIZING STUDY ABROAD

A Program Professionals' Guide to Strategies for Language and Culture Learning and Use

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MAXIMIZING STUDY ABROAD:
A Program Professionals' Guide to Strategies for Language and Culture Learning and Use

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Produced by
Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition
University of Minnesota
619 Heller Hall
271 - 19th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55455

ISBN: 0-9722545-1-X

First Edition, First Printing
Printed in the United States of America

Background

As with all successful collaborative efforts, the development of the Maximizing Study Abroad series has a long history and has involved the participation of many people. In 1999 the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA) at the University of Minnesota received funding from the U.S. Department of Education's Language Resource Center program to create a set of user-friendly materials on language- and culture-learning strategies designed to maximize students' study abroad experiences. This project was a logical extension of previous work conducted at CARLA on culture and language learning and strategies-based instruction.

During the period 1999-2002 the project leaders created, field-tested, and revised the following set of three guides as part of the Maximizing Study Abroad series:

> ***Maximizing Study Abroad: A Students' Guide to Strategies for Language and Culture Learning and Use***
>
> ***Maximizing Study Abroad: A Program Professionals' Guide to Strategies for Language and Culture Learning and Use***
>
> ***Maximizing Study Abroad: A Language Instructors' Guide to Strategies for Language and Culture Learning and Use***

Phases of the Project

The initial writing phase (1999-2000)

The initial writing phase of this project took place during the 1999-2000 academic year. The writing team was led by Professor Andrew D. Cohen on the language-learning strategies sections and Professor R. Michael Paige on the culture-learning strategies sections. Two graduate research assistants, Julie C. Chi and James P. Lassegard, worked in collaboration with Professors Cohen and Paige throughout the initial development of the guides.

The field-testing and revision phase – part 1 (2000-2001)

The field-testing and revision phase of the project was coordinated by Dr. Barbara Kappler (University of Minnesota International Student and Scholar Services) during the 2000-2001 academic year. The three guides were piloted with volunteer groups of language instructors, students engaged in study abroad programs, and study abroad program professionals and advisers at the University of Minnesota and selected sites throughout the country. Based on the rich feedback received, the guides were extensively reformatted and revised to be more appealing and accessible to end-users.

The field-testing and implementation phase – part 2 (2001-2002)

During the third and final phase of field-testing and development of the guides, prototypes were used to fully explore the range of options in which the materials could be used effectively. The core leadership group (Cohen, Kappler, and Paige) worked with faculty and staff from the Department of Spanish and Portuguese and the Global Campus • Study Abroad office at the University of Minnesota to demonstrate how the guides could be used in a wide range of teaching and study abroad contexts. As part of this demonstration phase, Margaret Demmessie, a seasoned instructor of

Spanish, taught a special "study abroad" section of beginning third-year Spanish using materials from the instructor and student guides. Each student in this special course section received a copy of the Students' Guide. Their response was very positive.

In addition to using the materials in a language course, special workshops were held in fall 2001 and spring 2002 for students planning to study abroad. Dr. Kappler facilitated another round of focus groups with language instructors from various language departments and program professionals from the Global Campus. In May 2002, CARLA sponsored an intensive workshop on how to use the guides, which attracted more than forty language instructors and study abroad program professionals. Half of the participants were staff and faculty at the University of Minnesota, while the other half came from study abroad programs in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Missouri, Maryland, and Colorado.

After three years of development, the faculty and staff at CARLA look forward with great anticipation to sharing the Maximizing Study Abroad series with a national audience of study abroad students, program professionals, and language instructors.

Acknowledgements

CARLA wishes to thank the many students, teachers, and study abroad professionals who have contributed to the development of the Maximizing Study Abroad series. (Those listed below are from the University of Minnesota unless otherwise noted.)

Maximizing Study Abroad project leaders

The initial vision and the background research for this project came from Professor Andrew Cohen and Professor R. Michael Paige, both leaders in their fields and active members of CARLA since its inception. Cohen's research on styles- and strategies-based language instruction and Paige's work on integrating concepts of intercultural communication into the second language classroom made this project possible. The collaborative scholarship provided both a solid research-based foundation and a framework to synthesize information from both fields into a new body of materials to support study abroad. We are deeply grateful to both for their vision for this project and their continued leadership within the center.

Professors Cohen and Paige were aided greatly in the first year of the project by two graduate students, Julie Chi and James Lassegard. Chi continued to contribute time and energy to this project beyond the time of her initial work as a graduate student, and Lassegard helped with some final details after he graduated and left the University. After the first drafts of all three guides had been completed, the materials needed to be piloted and revised, and Dr. Barbara Kappler, an assistant director of International Student and Scholar Services, was invited to lead the effort. She gathered and incorporated feedback from students, study abroad program professionals, and language instructors into the final publications. It was a tremendous task to synthesize the volumes of feedback and create more user-friendly texts from an academic framework, especially for the Students' Guide. Kappler's in-depth background in intercultural communication, her insights into study abroad experiences, and her skills as both a writer and editor helped transform the guides into a set of lively and informative materials that are engaging for students, program professionals, and language instructors alike.

Students

Many students gave feedback on the development of the Students' Guide during workshops, focus groups, and classes held at the University of Minnesota and other local institutions. Special recognition goes to students who, as part of the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program at the University of Minnesota, used the Students' Guide during their own study abroad experience or gave feedback based on previous study abroad experience including Jacob Dick, Kelly Lavin, Tammy Yach, and Molly Zahn.

Study abroad program professionals and program staff

Throughout the process of creating materials, gathering feedback, and revising, many of the staff members in the Global Campus and other departments at the University of Minnesota assisted in the task of distilling a vast quantity of information into a work that would be read by students. We are grateful to study abroad program professionals Sheila Collins, Sophie Gladding, Holly Zimmerman LeVoir, Heidi Soneson, and Susan Wiese for their willingness to let us "try out" the draft materials on their student audiences and for giving us feedback from their perspectives as program leaders. In addition we are grateful to other staff and students who helped review the guides including Bill Baldus, Michelle Cumming, Joan Brzezinski, Amy Greeley, Joe Hoff, April Knutson, Jodi Malmgren,

Gayla Marty, Rachel Sullivan-Nightengale, Barbara Pilling, Gayle Woodruff, and Yelena Yershova. Thanks also to Hanae Tsukada for collecting quotes from international students and for helping to rewrite the section on learning characters. Special recognition goes to Chip Peterson, a veteran in the field of study abroad, for his ongoing support, expertise, and uncanny ability to see both the big picture and the small details at the same time. For their overall support of this project, we express our warmest thanks to Al Balkcum, director of the Global Campus, and Kay Thomas, director of International Student and Scholar Services.

Language instructors

Specific feedback on all of the guides came from a wide network of language instructors at and around the University of Minnesota. Blair Bateman, Eleanora Bertranou, Lucy Carlone, Elaine Carter (St. Cloud State University), Isabelle Clavel, Kelly Conroy, Francine Klein, Muisi Krosi, Magara Maeda, Patricia Mougel, Allison Spenader, Susan Villar, and Ellen Wormwood gave enormously helpful feedback on the Instructors' Guide as part of a series of focus groups with language instructors. Special thanks goes to Charlotte Melin, Patricia Mougel, and Susan Villar for their help in supporting this work through their language departments. We greatly appreciated the enthusiasm and support of faculty and staff of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese for this project including department chair Carol Klee, Margaret Demmessie, Kathleen Ganley, and Susan Villar. Special thanks goes to Demmessie who brought many years of experience in language teaching and study abroad program coordination to the challenge of incorporating materials from the Guiges into her third-year Spanish language course. Her skills, insight, and zeal helped us to do a "real life" test of the materials and gave us a wealth of feedback that was incorporated into each of the guides.

Feedback from far and wide

The writing team at CARLA also solicited feedback from experts outside the University of Minnesota. We appreciate the helpful comments received from Anna Uhl Chamot (The George Washington University), Rebecca Oxford and Gloria Park (University of Maryland-College Park), Jonathon Rees (University of Birmingham), and Joan Rubin during various stages of the development of the material.

Behind the Scenes

Given the level of truth to the old adage, "the devil is in the details," we wish to thank those working in the CARLA office and in the Office of International Programs whose efforts have proved critical to the success of this project. Special recognition goes to Dan Supalla, a student worker with an incredible eye for proofreading; Jennifer Schulz, who brought her copyediting skills to the project, and Jesse Houchins for his fantastic cover design. Not enough can be said for the contributions of Suzanne Hay, the secretary of CARLA, who brought tremendous skill, background knowledge of study abroad, and good humor to the job of word processing, formatting, and editing through a series of drafts that became too numerous to count. A final note of thanks goes to our partners in the Office of International Programs, especially Executive Director C. Eugene Allen and Fiscal Officer Elaine Randolph, for their support on a number of fronts to bring this project to fruition.

Elaine Tarone
Director
CARLA

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Coordinator
CARLA

August 2002

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MAXIMIZING STUDY ABROAD

Program Professionals' Guide

Section I: Introduction

Welcome to Maximizing Study Abroad: A Program Professionals' Guide to Strategies for Culture and Language Learning and Use. The guide was written for study abroad program professionals like you to assist in facilitating students' culture and language learning before, during, and after their time abroad. As international educators ourselves, we know you face many challenges in supporting your students so that they get the most of their time abroad. This volume is intended to help you in this endeavor by addressing the following questions your colleagues in the study abroad field have raised:

- How can I better prepare my students for their study abroad experience? I have just three hours for the pre-departure orientation, so I mostly cover logistics. Plus, I don't have time to do the research and planning to redesign our orientation.
- I see many students coming home with regrets that they spent so much time speaking English. How can I help students do more with their language learning?
- Some of my students are really savvy about cross-cultural differences and seem quite prepared. Is there more that I can be offering them?
- I worry about the students with unrealistic expectations that in a few short months they will become fluent in the language. How can I help them set realistic goals and how can I help them get the most out of the time they have?
- Re-entry seems to be such a critical component of study abroad – if not *the* critical component. But my students return home and scatter. Can I really offer them anything?
- The way our advising is structured, I have so little contact with the students. How can I help them with language- and culture-learning strategies?
- It's really the faculty who have the biggest impact on their learning. What role can *I* play in teaching strategies for language and culture learning?
- While the students are overseas with me, even though I am from the host culture, I am not sure how to reach them. They do seem genuinely interested in learning about my culture and the language, but yet they seem to want quick answers about life here. I'm not sure they want to work very hard to truly understand the language and culture.

This guide is intended to assist you in addressing these challenges and much more. It is part of a project through the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA) at the University of Minnesota to produce language- and culture-learning materials for study abroad. There are three guides – one for students, one for study abroad program professionals, and one for language instructors. It is hoped that these guides will provide a unique means of integrating language and culture learning in order to give students the tools necessary to improve their language and culture learning during study abroad.

Who is a study abroad program professional?

For the purposes of this guide, a study abroad professional refers to all of you who assist students to study in a country outside of the U.S. As professionals, you engage in a wide range of activities, including: advising students on program selection, coordinating or directing a program, preparing students for their upcoming experiences, assisting students on-site, teaching courses in the host country, and being faculty mentors or facilitators of study abroad programs.

Why was the Students' Guide created?

> *During a meeting with a Japanese student studying in the U.S., she asked me, "If you grew up in a small town with little diversity as you say, how did you learn to be sensitive to international students' needs? How can you be so much easier to talk to than others I meet in this country?" How could I respond? While I was embarrassed by the public statement of the compliment, I also knew there were specific skills and motivations I had developed. Where did I learn these things? Was it from participating in BaFa BaFa before going to England? Was it being chastised by my British host mom for using too much hot water? Was it from offending friends in Malaysia by my direct questions? Or was it earlier, from my high school French teacher who taught us about French and Francophone cultures? I know I cannot pinpoint the time or the specific manner in which these skills developed. I do know I had a lot of help along the way. ~ Barbara Kappler, co-author of this guide*

The skills needed for being effective across cultures typically occur in seemingly random and haphazard intersections of experience, reflection, and trial and error. Further, the process usually requires a combination of self-confrontation and being challenged and supported by mentors (peers, faculty, program staff, host family members, etc.). What this means for us as educators is that the skills needed to maximize study abroad do not fully develop in the forums we typically offer. For example, while pre-departure sessions provide critical contact points to set the stage for skill development, students are often understandably preoccupied with the logistics of preparing to leave one country and the entrance to another. Even with the best pre-departure designs that integrate students' need for logistical information with the teaching of culture- and language-learning strategies, students often translate the information into specific behavioral advice (e.g., take my shoes off at the door in Japan), rather than developing skills of learning how to learn (e.g., appropriate ways to ask questions in this culture). Even a semester-long course of preparing for study abroad – while certainly leading to the development of essential skills – naturally compartmentalizes the process into discrete, albeit integrated, units of content.

In addition, students approach study abroad with different motivations and objectives. While some students take great interest in language and culture learning, many others don't take full advantage of the opportunities available to them. In reviewing the research on study abroad, it is clear that too often students studying abroad receive limited – and sometimes no – preparation to be language and culture learners and users. Despite our best intentions, these students depart for their programs lacking the knowledge and skills that would enable them to learn a foreign language more effectively while abroad and to understand the host country culture in its own context. Further, when these students are in the host-country, the availability of opportunities to learn specific strategies for culture and language learning varies widely. In-country staff are often consumed with day-to-day program management, leaving little time to fully facilitate the students' developmental process of language and culture learning. In our view, there is a compelling need to better assist this large group of learners so that the learners themselves, their sending institutions, and the host institutions can more fully realize the learning benefits of the study abroad experience (Paige & Kappler, 1998).

The purpose of these materials is to provide students with tools that will enable them to best navigate, interpret, and learn from their own cross-cultural encounters. If students learn strategies to achieve their learning goals, then their interest and motivation for language acquisition and culture learning will be enhanced and most importantly, they will have the tools to truly reach their goals. These guides were created to give students, staff, and faculty the opportunity to engage in a long-term process of developing skills in language and culture learning in a format that enables learners to

select topics that are most important to them before, during, and after their specific experiences with the culture and language.

Why a guide for study abroad professionals?

> *It's really important to have a program professional introduce this guide to help students use this. It gives you a lot more confidence, and I think you come back then from the experience much more excited. ~ Jacob Dick, Italy*

The Students' Guide was written to be used by individual students without any assistance from program staff. The Students' Guide has been field-tested and found to offer students explicit advice on how to deal with language and culture challenges. During the field-testing, some students expressed how much they enjoyed using their guide in collaboration with other students, and ideally, as part of a structured learning environment. A student's interest in working with others or on his or her own is of course greatly influenced by the student's individual learning preferences.

No matter how students are to use the Students' Guide, an introduction of the guide and an explanation of how it fits with their specific program, is of great help to students. This Program Professionals' Guide is intended to give you the background necessary to help you support the students' endeavors. This guide is thus a companion to the Students' Guide, offering background information on culture and language learning theory and detailed suggestions on facilitating activities from the Students' Guide.

What are language- and culture-learning strategies?

Think back on your own study abroad or recent language-learning experience. Take a moment to consider what you did:

- when you couldn't understand what someone was saying in the target language.
- to recall vocabulary.
- to practice speaking.
- to deal with different communicative styles.
- when you encountered difficult times in the new culture.

Your ability to respond in detail is based on your awareness of strategies that you personally use and have available to you. Few of us are taught to be aware – or how to be aware – of these strategies. The goal of the Maximizing Study Abroad guides is to increase students' awareness of the multitude of strategies available to them for language and culture learning.

More specifically, language- and culture-learning strategies refer to the conscious and semi-conscious thoughts and behaviors used by learners with the explicit goal of improving their knowledge and understanding of a target language and culture. Language- and culture-use strategies refer to strategies for using language and cultural information that have been learned, even if the strategies are imperfect or incomplete.

Culture- and language-learning strategy theorists believe that learners who know the fundamentals of culture and language, as well as how they learn most effectively, will have the necessary tools to facilitate their own learning. As such, the primary intent of this guide is not to dispense facts and information about specific countries and cultures. Instead, the culture- and language-learning strategies described apply to any geographical region or culture. Specific languages or cultures are used only to provide examples of the concepts being introduced.

Why integrate language and culture learning?

> *I wish I would have had the Students' Guide when I studied abroad! ~ Joe Hoff, study abroad professional*

Learning both the language and the culture(s) of the host country will help your students make the most of their study abroad experience. For example, if you can remember back to one of your experiences abroad, you may have had to learn the proper greetings for people depending on their age, status, or other factors. In learning the language differences and when to use them, you also learned important cultural information about formality and relationships in your host country.

One of the central premises of these Maximizing Study Abroad materials is that to become competent and effective sojourners in the host country, students need to pay close attention to both language and culture, whereas, in the past, this linkage has not always been acknowledged. Some scholars, such as Edward T. Hall, have gone as far as stating that communication is culture and vice versa. Work done by Sapir-Whorf has further examined the connection between language and culture. According to this hypothesis, language is:

> *...not merely a reproducing instrument for voicing ideas but rather is itself the shaper of ideas, the program and guide for the individual's mental activity, for his (her) analysis of impressions, for his (her) synthesis of his (her) mental stock in trade.* (Whorf, 1952).

While the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis over the years has sometimes been overstated and misinterpreted, educators today accept a moderate view that there is an interdependence of language and culture (Brown, 2000). Our experiences, and undoubtedly yours, suggest that some concepts are not readily or are nearly impossible to translate. For example, it is true that many words have a particular meaning that does not exist outside of that culture. Certainly, translation is possible, but the cultural context and the underlying cultural assumptions would be missing. Likewise, the phrase "pick one's self up by the bootstraps" may seem quite alien and almost untranslatable in many non-U.S.-American cultures. It seems unnecessary to try to debate whether language is formed as the result of culture or if culture is derived from language. This would be a bit like the chicken and the egg dilemma. Essentially, it is perhaps safe to say that language and culture are interrelated and work to mutually support and influence each other.

How can I use this guide?

This guide provides you with helpful background information on student development that can assist you in designing or redesigning your current work with students. This guide also offers you detailed suggestions on facilitating activities from the Students' Guide. Finally, Section VI details various ways you can use the guide, offering suggestions for pre-departure and on-site orientations, on-going discussions in-country, and field trips.

What knowledge and skills are needed for using this guide?

Many of you have had significant experience studying and living abroad and most likely have skills in a foreign language. This personal experience, combined with a commitment to international education, are important for facilitating the students' experience. In addition, a basic knowledge of language and culture learning and development is essential in order to facilitate and debrief specific activities with students, to make the best decisions about what to include in your programs, and to decide how to sequence the student's learning. This foundation is outlined in Section III of this guide.

If you have less intercultural and language experience, you are encouraged to review carefully the Students' Guide. Whatever your language and culture knowledge level, this guide is designed to accommodate all learning and skill levels and can be used as a resource to refer back to when needed. The extensive bibliography listed at the end of the guide provides a wealth of information for further exploration of the topic.

Where to begin?

1. We encourage you to begin with the same task that we ask of the students. We begin the Students' Guide with three surveys (which are found in Section II of this guide):
   - The Learning Style Survey
   - The Language Strategy Use Inventory and Index
   - The Culture-Learning Strategies Inventory and Index

   The Learning Style Survey allows the students to assess their general approach to language learning. The Language and Culture Inventories give the students an opportunity to review specific strategies and determine if they know the strategy, if the strategy does not fit them, or if they would like more information on the strategy. In this sense, the surveys can be used to direct the students to the portion of the Students' Guide that will help them the most.

   We suggest that you also take the surveys so that you are more aware of your own learning style preferences and strategy use. After you have taken the surveys, consider how your preferred styles and strategies influence your work with students. You may want to consider using ways other than those that reflect your preferred styles and strategies to reach students who have styles and strategies different from your own.

2. Next, become familiar with the Students' Guide by going to the sections most applicable to you. Then, turn to the sections that you think will be most helpful to your students. Begin to consider ways you can incorporate the material and activities into your own programs.

3. After completing the surveys and becoming familiar with the Students' Guide, we encourage you to review carefully Section III of this guide, which discusses "Students' Language and Culture Learning and Development." This material provides a brief overview of the foundation needed to help your students get the most out of their study abroad.

4. The next chapters of this guide consist of specific information about the culture and language sections of the Students' Guide. Here is where you will find detailed information to guide you through the facilitation of specific activities.

5. Section VI, "Orientations and Workshops," provides suggestions on how to use the guide in various settings.

6. And finally, the "Activities and Handouts" section provides you with activities from the Students' Guide for which you have our permission to copy and use with your students.

Organization of culture-learning strategies materials

The culture-learning section of this guide is designed to support and supplement the culture-learning materials from the Students' Guide. Since your job may entail leading orientations or other large-group activities with study abroad students, this section begins with an overview of facilitation

and the importance of debriefing for intercultural learning as well as guidelines for using activities from the Students' Guide.

The Culture-Learning Strategies section is divided into three distinct parts: pre-departure, in-country, and post-study-abroad. Each part contains activities and materials from the Students' Guide you can use with your students to reinforce their culture-learning strategies. To help you gain a deeper understanding of the material, these chapters also contain theoretical background information on culture learning that is not covered in the Students' Guide. Though the learning materials in each chapter are meant to be covered sequentially, you may want to revisit chapters or sections or jump ahead to specific sections based on the needs of your students and program.

Organization of language-learning strategies materials

In this guide we provide key terms on language-learning strategies and walk you through the Students' Guide so that you can better understand its contents and be prepared for possible questions from students about learning language in a study abroad situation.

The language-learning strategies section is organized according to the chapters found in the Students' Guide: Listening, Learning Vocabulary, Speaking to Communicate, Reading for Comprehension, Writing, and Translation.

General advice for working with this guide

Be creative with the use of this guide, based upon what areas of culture learning you feel that students need the most. As part of the learning process, it is recommended that you and your students return periodically to previously completed activities and exercises for review and to see how much has been learned. Depending on your point of contact with students, every section of the guide may or may not be applicable, though all the sections will help you effectively assess and support your students' language and culture learning.

MAXIMIZING STUDY ABROAD

Program Professionals' Guide

Section II:
Surveys and Indexes

In this first portion of the Program Professionals' Guide, we are inviting you to fill out three surveys, all intended to give you a better sense of how you relate to language and culture. We encourage you to take the surveys so you can familiarize yourself with your own learning preferences and use of strategies. This familiarity will help you to become more aware of the content in the Students' Guide and can help you anticipate how your students might use the guide. The first survey deals with your learning-style preferences, the second with your language strategy choices, and the third with your cross-cultural sensitivity. While our treatment of learning styles is limited to the brief introduction below and to the text accompanying the learning style survey, the language and culture surveys provide page numbers indicating further reading on issues raised by survey items. If you want more information on specific strategies, you can go directly to the page of the Students' Guide indicated in the survey.

The Learning Style Survey

We all have preferences for how we like to learn. While you may have a general sense of your preferences already, this survey can help you deepen your understanding by comparing and contrasting 11 different learning styles.

Learning-style preferences allow us to understand and organize our learning. Since some aspects of learning are usually out of your control (you may have to take a class where the professor lectures nearly 100 percent of the time), you can improve your learning by understanding your strengths and weaknesses. For example, knowing that you prefer a visual style does not give you free license to demand that professors teach to your style. In fact, it may be absolutely culturally inappropriate to make such a request and might reflect your own hesitancy and reluctance to adapt to the host culture. Instead, knowing that you are a visual learner helps you to understand that you may need to create your own visuals, team with auditory learners, and tap into your own auditory skills that exist but are not fully developed. In short, our goal is to help you "style-stretch" by incorporating approaches that you may have resisted in the past.

Note: The copies of the surveys that follow are meant for you to use and write on. A version of the surveys is included in Section VII for you to copy and use with your students.

Author's Note: The format of the Learning Styles Survey and a number of the dimensions and items are drawn from Oxford's Style Analysis Survey, 1995, in J. Reid (Ed.), *Learning styles in the ESL/EFL classroom* (pp. 208-215). Boston: Heinle & Heinle/Thomson International. Other key dimensions and some of the wording of items comes from Ehrman and Leaver's E&L Questionnaire, 2001. For more information on this questionnaire, see the Resources Section of this Guide.

Learning Style Survey:

Assessing Your Own Learning Styles

Andrew D. Cohen, Rebecca L. Oxford, and Julie C. Chi

The Learning Style Survey is designed to assess your general approach to learning. It does not predict your behavior in every instance, but it is a clear indication of your overall style preferences. For each item, circle the response that represents your approach. Complete all items. There are eleven major activities representing twelve different aspects of your learning style. When you read the statements, try to think about what you generally do when learning. It generally takes about 30 minutes to complete the survey. Do not spend too much time on any item – indicate your immediate feeling and move on to the next item.

For each item, circle your response:

0 = Never
1 = Rarely
2 = Sometimes
3 = Often
4 = Always

Part 1: HOW I USE MY PHYSICAL SENSES

1. I remember something better if I write it down.	0 1 2 3 4
2. I take detailed notes during lectures.	0 1 2 3 4
3. When I listen, I visualize pictures, numbers, or words in my head.	0 1 2 3 4
4. I prefer to learn with TV or video rather than other media.	0 1 2 3 4
5. I use color-coding to help me as I learn or work.	0 1 2 3 4
6. I need written directions for tasks.	0 1 2 3 4
7. I have to look at people to understand what they say.	0 1 2 3 4
8. I understand lectures better when professors write on the board.	0 1 2 3 4
9. Charts, diagrams, and maps help me understand what someone says.	0 1 2 3 4
10. I remember peoples' faces but not their names.	0 1 2 3 4
	A - Total _____
11. I remember things better if I discuss them with someone.	0 1 2 3 4
12. I prefer to learn by listening to a lecture rather than reading.	0 1 2 3 4
13. I need oral directions for a task.	0 1 2 3 4
14. Background sound helps me think.	0 1 2 3 4
15. I like to listen to music when I study or work.	0 1 2 3 4
16. I can understand what people say even when I cannot see them.	0 1 2 3 4
17. I remember peoples' names but not their faces.	0 1 2 3 4
18. I easily remember jokes that I hear.	0 1 2 3 4
19. I can identify people by their voices (e.g., on the phone).	0 1 2 3 4
20. When I turn on the TV, I listen to the sound more than I watch the screen.	0 1 2 3 4
	B - Total _____

21. I'd rather start to do things, rather than pay attention to directions.	0 1 2 3 4
22. I need frequent breaks when I work or study.	0 1 2 3 4
23. I need to eat something when I read or study.	0 1 2 3 4
24. If I have a choice between sitting and standing, I'd rather stand.	0 1 2 3 4
25. I get nervous when I sit still too long.	0 1 2 3 4
26. I think better when I move around (e.g., pacing or tapping my feet).	0 1 2 3 4
27. I play with or bite on my pens during lectures.	0 1 2 3 4
28. Manipulating objects helps me to remember what someone says.	0 1 2 3 4
29. I move my hands when I speak.	0 1 2 3 4
30. I draw lots of pictures (doodles) in my notebook during lectures.	0 1 2 3 4

C - Total _____

Part 2: HOW I EXPOSE MYSELF TO LEARNING SITUATIONS

1. I learn better when I work or study with others than by myself.	0 1 2 3 4
2. I meet new people easily by jumping into the conversation.	0 1 2 3 4
3. I learn better in the classroom than with a private tutor.	0 1 2 3 4
4. It is easy for me to approach strangers.	0 1 2 3 4
5. Interacting with lots of people gives me energy.	0 1 2 3 4
6. I experience things first and then try to understand them.	0 1 2 3 4

A - Total _____

7. I am energized by the inner world (what I'm thinking inside).	0 1 2 3 4
8. I prefer individual or one-on-one games and activities.	0 1 2 3 4
9. I have a few interests, and I concentrate deeply on them.	0 1 2 3 4
10. After working in a large group, I am exhausted.	0 1 2 3 4
11. When I am in a large group, I tend to keep silent and listen.	0 1 2 3 4
12. I want to understand something well before I try it.	0 1 2 3 4

B - Total _____

Part 3: HOW I HANDLE POSSIBILITIES

1. I have a creative imagination.	0 1 2 3 4
2. I try to find many options and possibilities for why something happens.	0 1 2 3 4
3. I plan carefully for future events.	0 1 2 3 4
4. I like to discover things myself rather than have everything explained to me.	0 1 2 3 4
5. I add many original ideas during class discussions.	0 1 2 3 4
6. I am open-minded to new suggestions from my peers.	0 1 2 3 4

A - Total _____

7. I focus in on a situation as it is rather than thinking about how it could be.	0 1 2 3 4
8. I read instruction manuals (e.g., for computers or VCRs) before using the device.	0 1 2 3 4

9. I trust concrete facts instead of new, untested ideas.	0 1 2 3 4
10. I prefer things presented in a step-by-step way.	0 1 2 3 4
11. I dislike it if my classmate changes the plan for our project.	0 1 2 3 4
12. I follow directions carefully.	0 1 2 3 4

B - Total _____

Part 4: HOW I DEAL WITH AMBIGUITY AND WITH DEADLINES

1. I like to plan language study sessions carefully and do lessons on time or early.	0 1 2 3 4
2. My notes, handouts, and other school materials are carefully organized.	0 1 2 3 4
3. I like to be certain about what things mean in a target language.	0 1 2 3 4
4. I like to know how rules are applied and why.	0 1 2 3 4

A - Total _____

5. I let deadlines slide if I'm involved in other things.	0 1 2 3 4
6. I let things pile up on my desk to be organized eventually.	0 1 2 3 4
7. I don't worry about comprehending everything.	0 1 2 3 4
8. I don't feel the need to come to rapid conclusions about a topic.	0 1 2 3 4

B - Total _____

Part 5: HOW I RECEIVE INFORMATION

1. I prefer short and simple answers rather than long explanations.	0 1 2 3 4
2. I ignore details that do not seem relevant.	0 1 2 3 4
3. It is easy for me to see the overall plan or big picture.	0 1 2 3 4
4. I get the main idea, and that's enough for me.	0 1 2 3 4
5. When I tell an old story, I tend to forget lots of specific details.	0 1 2 3 4

A - Total _____

6. I need very specific examples in order to understand fully.	0 1 2 3 4
7. I pay attention to specific facts or information.	0 1 2 3 4
8. I'm good at catching new phrases or words when I hear them.	0 1 2 3 4
9. I enjoy activities where I fill in the blank with missing words I hear.	0 1 2 3 4
10. When I try to tell a joke, I remember details but forget the punch line.	0 1 2 3 4

B - Total _____

Part 6: HOW I FURTHER PROCESS INFORMATION

1. I can summarize information easily.	0 1 2 3 4
2. I can quickly paraphrase what other people say.	0 1 2 3 4
3. When I create an outline, I consider the key points first.	0 1 2 3 4
4. I enjoy activities where I have to pull ideas together.	0 1 2 3 4
5. By looking at the whole situation, I can easily understand someone.	0 1 2 3 4

A - Total _____

6. I have a hard time understanding when I don't know every word. 0 1 2 3 4
7. When I tell a story or explain something, it takes a long time. 0 1 2 3 4
8. I like to focus on grammar rules. 0 1 2 3 4
9. I'm good at solving complicated mysteries and puzzles. 0 1 2 3 4
10. I am good at noticing even the smallest details regarding some task. 0 1 2 3 4

B - Total _____

Part 7: HOW I COMMIT MATERIAL TO MEMORY

1. I try to pay attention to all the features of new material as I learn. 0 1 2 3 4
2. When I memorize different bits of language material, I can retrieve these bits easily – as if I had stored them in separate slots in my brain. 0 1 2 3 4
3. As I learn new material in the target language, I make fine distinctions among speech sounds, grammatical forms, and words and phrases. 0 1 2 3 4

A - Total _____

4. When learning new information, I may clump together data by eliminating or reducing differences and focusing on similarities. 0 1 2 3 4
5. I ignore distinctions that would make what I say more accurate in the given context. 0 1 2 3 4
6. Similar memories become blurred in my mind; I merge new learning experiences with previous ones. 0 1 2 3 4

B - Total _____

Part 8: HOW I DEAL WITH LANGUAGE RULES

1. I like to go from general patterns to the specific examples in learning a target language. 0 1 2 3 4
2. I like to start with rules and theories rather than specific examples. 0 1 2 3 4
3. I like to begin with generalizations and then find experiences that relate to those generalizations. 0 1 2 3 4

A - Total _____

4. I like to learn rules of language indirectly by being exposed to examples of grammatical structures and other language features. 0 1 2 3 4
5. I don't really care if I hear a rule stated since I don't remember rules very well anyway. 0 1 2 3 4
6. I figure out rules based on the way I see language forms behaving over time. 0 1 2 3 4

B - Total _____

Part 9: HOW I DEAL WITH MULTIPLE INPUTS

1. I can separate out the relevant and important information in a given context even when distracting information is present.	0 1 2 3 4
2. When I produce an oral or written message in the target language, I make sure that all the grammatical structures are in agreement with each other.	0 1 2 3 4
3. I not only attend to grammar but check for appropriate level of formality and politeness.	0 1 2 3 4
	A - Total _____
4. When speaking or writing, a focus on grammar would be at the expense of attention to the content of the message.	0 1 2 3 4
5. It is a challenge for me to both focus on communication in speech or writing while at the same time paying attention to grammatical agreement (e.g., person, number, tense, or gender).	0 1 2 3 4
6. When I am using lengthy sentences in a target language, I get distracted and neglect aspects of grammar and style.	0 1 2 3 4
	B - Total _____

Part 10: HOW I DEAL WITH RESPONSE TIME

1. I react quickly in language situations.	0 1 2 3 4
2. I go with my instincts in the target language.	0 1 2 3 4
3. I jump in, see what happens, and make corrections if needed.	0 1 2 3 4
	A - Total _____
4. I need to think things through before speaking or writing.	0 1 2 3 4
5. I like to look before I leap when determining what to say or write in a target language.	0 1 2 3 4
6. I attempt to find supporting material in my mind before I set about producing language.	0 1 2 3 4
	B - Total _____

Part 11: HOW LITERALLY I TAKE REALITY

1. I find that building metaphors in my mind helps me deal with language (e.g., viewing the language like a machine with component parts that can be disassembled).	0 1 2 3 4
2. I learn things through metaphors and associations with other things. I find stories and examples help me learn.	0 1 2 3 4
	A - Total _____
3. I take learning language literally and don't deal in metaphors.	0 1 2 3 4
4. I take things at face value, so I like language material that says what it means directly.	0 1 2 3 4
	B - Total _____

Understanding your totals

Once you have totaled your points, write the results in the blanks below. Circle the higher number in each part (if they are close, circle both). Read about your learning styles starting below.

Part 1:
A ____ Visual
B ____ Auditory
C ____ Tactile / Kinesthetic

Part 2:
A ____ Extraverted
B ____ Introverted

Part 3:
A ____ Random-Intuitive
B ____ Concrete-Sequential

Part 4:
A ____ Closure-Oriented
B ____ Open

Part 5:
A ____ Global
B ____ Particular

Part 6:
A ____ Synthesizing
B ____ Analytic

Part 7:
A ____ Sharpener
B ____ Leveler

Part 8:
A ____ Deductive
B ____ Inductive

Part 9:
A ____ Field-Independent
B ____ Field-Dependent

Part 10:
A ____ Impulsive
B ____ Reflective

Part 11:
A ____ Metaphoric
B ____ Literal

Note:
Before reading the next section, understand that this is only a general description of your learning style preferences. It does not describe you *all of the time*, but gives you an idea of your tendencies when you learn. Note that in some learning situations, you may have one set of style preferences and in a different situation, another set of preferences. Also, there are both advantages and disadvantages to every style preference.

If on the sensory style preferences (visual, auditory, tactile/kinesthetic) you prefer two or all three of these senses (i.e., your totals for the categories are within five points or so), you are likely to be flexible enough to enjoy a wide variety of activities in the language classroom. On the other dimensions, although they appear to be in opposition, it is possible for you to have high scores on both, meaning that you do not have a preference one way or the other. Here are three examples: on the extroverted-introverted distinction, you are able to work effectively with others as well as by yourself; on the closure-open distinction, you enjoy the freedom of limited structure and can still get the task done before the deadline without stress; on the global-particular distinction, you can handle both the gist and the details easily.

Furthermore, learning style preferences change throughout your life, and you can also stretch them, so don't feel that you are constrained to one style.

Part 1: HOW I USE MY PHYSICAL SENSES

If you came out as more visual than auditory, you rely more on the sense of sight, and you learn best through visual means (books, video, charts, pictures). If you are more auditory in preference, you prefer listening and speaking activities (discussions, lectures, audio tapes, role-plays). If you have a tactile/kinesthetic style preference, you benefit from doing projects, working with objects, and moving around (games, building models, conducting experiments).

Part 2: HOW I EXPOSE MYSELF TO LEARNING SITUATIONS

If you came out more extraverted on this survey, you probably enjoy a wide range of social, interactive learning tasks (games, conversations, discussions, debates, role-plays, simulations). If you came out more introverted, you probably like to do more independent work (studying or reading by yourself or learning with a computer) or enjoy working with one other person you know well.

Part 3: HOW I HANDLE POSSIBILITIES

If you scored more random-intuitive, you are most likely more future-oriented, prefer what can be over what is, like to speculate about possibilities, enjoy abstract thinking, and tend to disfavor step-by-step instruction. If your style preference was more concrete-sequential, you are likely to be more present-oriented, prefer one-step-at-a-time activities, and want to know where you are going in your learning at every moment.

Part 4: HOW I APPROACH TASKS

If you are more closure-oriented, you probably focus carefully on most or all learning tasks, strive to meet deadlines, plan ahead for assignments, and want explicit directions. If you are more open in your orientation, you enjoy discovery learning (in which you pick up information naturally) and prefer to relax and enjoy your learning without concern for deadlines or rules.

Part 5: HOW I RECEIVE INFORMATION

If you have a more global style preference, you enjoy getting the gist or main idea and are comfortable communicating even if you don't know all the words or concepts. If you are more particular in preference, you focus more on details and remember specific information about a topic well.

Part 6: HOW I FURTHER PROCESS INFORMATION

If you are a synthesizing person, you can summarize material well, enjoy guessing meanings and predicting outcomes, and notice similarities quickly. If you are analytic, you can pull ideas apart and do well on logical analysis and contrast tasks, and you tend to focus on grammar rules.

Part 7: HOW I COMMIT MATERIAL TO MEMORY

If you are a sharpener, you tend to notice differences and seek distinctions among items as you commit material to memory. You like to distinguish small differences and to separate memory of prior experiences from memory of current ones. You can easily retrieve the different items because you store them separately. You like to make fine distinctions among speech sounds, grammatical forms, and meaningful elements of language (words and phrases). If you are a leveler, you are likely to clump material together in order to remember it, by eliminating or reducing differences, and by focusing almost exclusively on similarities. You are likely to blur similar memories and to merge new experiences readily with previous ones. If you are concerned about accuracy and getting it all right, then the sharpener approach is perhaps preferable. If you are concerned about expediency, then being a leveler may be the key to communication.

Part 8: HOW I DEAL WITH LANGUAGE RULES

If you are a more deductive learner, you like to go from the general to the specific, to apply generalizations to experience, and to start with rules and theories rather than with specific examples. If you are a more inductive learner, you like to go from specific to general and prefer to begin with examples rather than rules or theories.

Part 9: HOW I DEAL WITH MULTIPLE INPUTS

If you are more field-independent in style preference, you like to separate or abstract material from within a given context, even in the presence of distractions. You may, however, have less facility dealing with information holistically. If you are more field-dependent in preference, you tend to deal with information in a more holistic or "gestalt" way. Consequently you may have greater difficulty in separating or abstracting material from its context. You work best without distractions.

Part 10: HOW I DEAL WITH RESPONSE TIME

If you are a more impulsive learner, you react quickly in acting or speaking without thinking the situation through. For you, thought often follows action. If you are a more reflective learner, you think things through before taking action and often do not trust your gut reactions. In your case, action usually follows thought.

Part 11: HOW LITERALLY I TAKE REALITY

If you are a metaphoric learner, you learn material more effectively if you conceptualize aspects of it, such as the grammar system, in metaphorical terms. You make the material more comprehensible by developing and applying an extended metaphor to it (e.g., visualizing the grammar system of a given language as an engine that can be assembled and disassembled). If you are a literal learner, you prefer a relatively literal representation of concepts and like to work with language material more or less as it is on the surface.

Tips for the learner

Each style preference offers significant strengths in learning and working. Recognize your strengths to take advantage of ways you learn best. Also, enhance your learning and working power by being aware of and developing the style areas that you do *not* normally use. Tasks that do not seem quite as suited to your style preferences will help you stretch beyond your ordinary comfort zone, expanding your learning and working potential.

For example, if you are a highly global person, you might need to learn to pay more attention to detail in order to learn more effectively. If you are an extremely detail-oriented person, you might be missing out on some useful global characteristics, like getting the main idea quickly. You can develop such qualities in yourself through practice. You won't lose your basic strengths by trying something new; you will simply develop another side of yourself that is likely to be very helpful to your language learning.

If you aren't sure how to attempt new behaviors that go *beyond* your favored style, then ask your colleagues, friends, or teachers to give you a hand. Talk with someone who has a different style from yours and see how that person does it. Improve your learning or working situation by stretching your style!

Language Strategy Use Inventory and Index

Andrew D. Cohen and Julie C. Chi

The purpose of this inventory is to find out more about yourself as a language learner and to help you discover strategies that can help you master a new language. Check the box that describes your use of each listed strategy. The categories are: ***I use this strategy and like it; I have tried this strategy and would use it again; I've never used this strategy but am interested in it***; and ***This strategy doesn't fit for me***. By referring to the page numbers at the end of each section, you can use this inventory as an index to find out more about the strategies that interest you. Please note that "target" language refers to the new language you are learning.

Listening Strategy Use

	I use this strategy and like it	I have tried this strategy and would use it again	I've never used this strategy but am interested in it	This strategy doesn't fit for me
Strategies to increase my exposure to the target language:				
1. Attend out-of-class events where the new language is spoken.	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Listen to talk shows on the radio, watch TV shows, or see movies in the target language.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Listen to the language in a restaurant or store where the staff speak the target language.	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Listen in on people who are having conversations in the target language to try to catch the gist of what they are saying.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies to become more familiar with the sounds in the target language:				
5. Practice sounds in the target language that are very different from sounds in my own language to become comfortable with them.	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Look for associations between the sound of a word or phrase in the new language with the sound of a familiar word.	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Imitate the way native speakers talk.	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Ask a native speaker about unfamiliar sounds that I hear.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies to prepare to listen to conversation in the target language:				
9. Pay special attention to specific aspects of the language; for example, the way the speaker pronounces certain sounds.	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. Try to predict what the other person is going to say based on what has been said so far.	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. Prepare for talks and performances I will hear in the target language by reading some background materials beforehand.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies to listen to conversation in the target language:				
12. Listen for key words that seem to carry the bulk of the meaning.	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. Listen for word and sentence stress to see what native speakers emphasize when they speak.	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. Pay attention to when and how long people tend to pause.	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. Pay attention to the rise and fall of speech by native speakers – the "music" of it.	☐	☐	☐	☐

	I use this strategy and like it	I have tried this strategy and would use it again	I've never used this strategy but am interested in it	This strategy doesn't fit for me
16. Practice "skim listening" by paying attention to some parts and ignoring others.	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. Try to understand what I hear without translating it word-for-word.	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. Focus on the context of what people are saying.	☐	☐	☐	☐
19. Listen for specific details to see whether I can understand them.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies for when I do not understand some or most of what someone says in the target language:				
20. Ask speakers to repeat what they said if it wasn't clear to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐
21. Ask speakers to slow down if they are speaking too fast.	☐	☐	☐	☐
22. Ask for clarification if I don't understand it the first time around.	☐	☐	☐	☐
23. Use the speakers' tone of voice as a clue to the meaning of what they are saying.	☐	☐	☐	☐
24. Make educated guesses about the topic based on what has already been said.	☐	☐	☐	☐
25. Draw on my general background knowledge to get the main idea.	☐	☐	☐	☐
26. Watch speakers' gestures and general body language to help me figure out the meaning of what they are saying.	☐	☐	☐	☐

For more information on listening strategies, see pages 165-179 in the Students' Guide.

Vocabulary Strategy Use

	I use this strategy and like it	I have tried this strategy and would use it again	I've never used this strategy but am interested in it	This strategy doesn't fit for me
Strategies to learn new words:				
27. Pay attention to the structure of the new word.	☐	☐	☐	☐
28. Break the word into parts that I can identify.	☐	☐	☐	☐
29. Group words according to parts of speech (e.g., nouns, verbs).	☐	☐	☐	☐
30. Associate the sound of the new word with the sound of a word that is familiar to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐
31. Use rhyming to remember new words.	☐	☐	☐	☐
32. Make a mental image of new words.	☐	☐	☐	☐
33. List new words with other words that are related to it.	☐	☐	☐	☐
34. Write out new words in meaningful sentences.	☐	☐	☐	☐
35. Practice new action verbs by acting them out.	☐	☐	☐	☐
36. Use flash cards in a systematic way to learn new words.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies to review vocabulary:				
37. Go over new words often when I first learn them to help me remember them.	☐	☐	☐	☐
38. Review words periodically so I don't forget them.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies to recall vocabulary:				
39. Look at meaningful parts of the word (e.g., the prefix or the suffix) to remind me of the meaning of the word.	☐	☐	☐	☐
40. Make an effort to remember the situation where I first heard or saw the word or remember the page or sign where I saw it written.	☐	☐	☐	☐
41. Visualize the spelling of new words in my mind.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies to make use of new vocabulary:				
42. Try using new words in a variety of ways.	☐	☐	☐	☐
43. Practice using familiar words in different ways.	☐	☐	☐	☐
44. Make an effort to use idiomatic expressions in the new language.	☐	☐	☐	☐

For more information on vocabulary strategies, see pages 181-195 in the Students' Guide.

Speaking Strategy Use

	I use this strategy and like it	I have tried this strategy and would use it again	I've never used this strategy but am interested in it	This strategy doesn't fit for me
Strategies to practice speaking:				
45. Practice saying new expressions to myself.	☐	☐	☐	☐
46. Practice new grammatical structures in different situations to build my confidence level in using them.	☐	☐	☐	☐
47. Think about how a native speaker might say something and practice saying it that way.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies to engage in conversations:				
48. Regularly seek out opportunities to talk with native speakers.	☐	☐	☐	☐
49. Initiate conversations in the target language as often as possible.	☐	☐	☐	☐
50. Direct the conversation to familiar topics.	☐	☐	☐	☐
51. Plan out in advance what I want to say.	☐	☐	☐	☐
52. Ask questions as a way to be involved in the conversation.	☐	☐	☐	☐
53. Anticipate what will be said based on what has been said so far.	☐	☐	☐	☐
54. Try topics even when they aren't familiar to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐
55. Encourage others to correct errors in my speaking.	☐	☐	☐	☐
56. Try to figure out and model native speakers' language patterns when requesting, apologizing, or complaining.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies for when I can't think of a word or expression:				
57. Ask for help from my conversational partner.	☐	☐	☐	☐
58. Look for a different way to express the idea, like using a synonym.	☐	☐	☐	☐
59. Use words from my own language, but say it in a way that sounds like words in the target language.	☐	☐	☐	☐
60. Make up new words or guess if I don't know the right ones to use.	☐	☐	☐	☐
61. Use gestures as a way to try and get my meaning across.	☐	☐	☐	☐
62. Switch back to my own language momentarily if I know that the person I'm talking to can understand what is being said.	☐	☐	☐	☐

For more information on speaking strategies, see pages 197-214 in the Students' Guide.

Reading Strategy Use

	I use this strategy and like it	I have tried this strategy and would use it again	I've never used this strategy but am interested in it	This strategy doesn't fit for me
Strategies to improve my reading ability:				
63. Read as much as possible in the target language.	☐	☐	☐	☐
64. Try to find things to read for pleasure in the target language.	☐	☐	☐	☐
65. Find reading material that is at or near my level.	☐	☐	☐	☐
66. Plan out in advance how I'm going to read the text, monitor to see how I'm doing, and then check to see how much I understand.	☐	☐	☐	☐
67. Skim an academic text first to get the main idea and then go back and read it more carefully.	☐	☐	☐	☐
68. Read a story or dialogue several times until I understand it.	☐	☐	☐	☐
69. Pay attention to the organization of the text, especially headings and subheadings.	☐	☐	☐	☐
70. Make ongoing summaries of the reading either in my mind or in the margins of the text.	☐	☐	☐	☐
71. Make predictions as to what will happen next.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies for when words and grammatical structures are not understood:				
72. Guess the approximate meaning by using clues from the context of the reading material.	☐	☐	☐	☐
73. Use a dictionary to get a detailed sense of what individual words mean.	☐	☐	☐	☐

For more information on reading strategies, see pages 215-221 in the Students' Guide.

Writing Strategy Use

	I use this strategy and like it	I have tried this strategy and would use it again	I've never used this strategy but am interested in it	This strategy doesn't fit for me
Strategies for basic writing:				
75. Practice writing the alphabet and/or new words in the target language.	☐	☐	☐	☐
76. Plan out in advance how to write academic papers, monitor how my writing is going, and check to see how well my writing reflects what I want to say.	☐	☐	☐	☐
77. Try writing different kinds of texts in the target language (e.g., personal notes, messages, letters, and course papers).	☐	☐	☐	☐
78. Take class notes in the target language as much as I'm able.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies for writing an essay or academic paper:				
79. Find a different way to express the idea when I don't know the correct expression (e.g., use a synonym or describe the idea).	☐	☐	☐	☐
80. Review what I have already written before continuing to write more.	☐	☐	☐	☐
81. Use reference materials such as a glossary, a dictionary, or a thesaurus to help find or verify words in the target language.	☐	☐	☐	☐
82. Wait to edit my writing until all my ideas are down on paper.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies to use after writing a draft of an essay or paper:				
83. Revise my writing once or twice to improve the language and content.	☐	☐	☐	☐
84. Try to get feedback from others, especially native speakers of the language.	☐	☐	☐	☐

For more information on writing strategies, see pages 223-230 in the Students' Guide.

Translation Strategy Use

	I use this strategy and like it	I have tried this strategy and would use it again	I've never used this strategy but am interested in it	This strategy doesn't fit for me
Strategies for translation:				
85. Plan out what to say or write in my own language and then translate it into the target language.	☐	☐	☐	☐
86. Translate in my head while I am reading to help me understand the text.	☐	☐	☐	☐
87. Translate parts of a conversation into my own language to help me remember the conversation.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies for working directly in the target language as much as possible:				
88. Put my own language out of mind and think only in the target language as much as possible.	☐	☐	☐	☐
89. Try to understand what has been heard or read without translating it word-for-word into my own language.	☐	☐	☐	☐
90. Use caution when directly transferring words and ideas from my own language into the target language.	☐	☐	☐	☐

For more information on translation strategies, see pages 231-234 in the Students' Guide.

Culture-Learning Strategies Inventory and Index

R. M. Paige, J. Rong, W. Zheng, and B. Kappler

The purpose of this inventory is to find out more about yourself as a culture learner and to help you discover strategies that can help you adapt to cultures that are different from your own. Check the box that describes your use of each listed strategy. The categories are: ***I use this strategy and like it; I have tried this strategy and would use it again; I've never used this strategy but am interested in it***; and ***This strategy doesn't fit for me***. By referring to the page numbers at the end of each section, you can use this inventory as an index to find out more about the strategies that interest you.

Pre-Departure Strategies

Strategies for when I am in surroundings that are culturally different from what I am used to:	I use this strategy and like it	I have tried this strategy and would use it again	I've never used this strategy but am interested in it	This strategy doesn't fit for me
1. Consider ways in which different cultures might view things in different ways (e.g., how different cultures value "alone time" or independence).	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Figure out what cultural values might be involved when I encounter a conflict or something goes wrong.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Think about different cross-cultural perspectives to examine situations in which I seem to offend someone or do something wrong.	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Use generalizations instead of stereotypes when I make statements about people who are different from me.	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Counter stereotypes others use about people from my country by using generalizations and cultural values instead.	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Make distinctions between behavior that is personal (unique to the person), cultural (representative of the person's culture), and universal (a shared human concern).	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Look at similarities as well as differences between people of different backgrounds.	☐	☐	☐	☐

For more information on pre-departure strategies, see pages 39-73 in the Students' Guide.

The next portion of the Culture-Learning Strategies Inventory and Index looks at the culture-learning strategies you think you will use once you are in the country of your study abroad experience, referred to in this inventory as your "host country." If you have studied abroad before, you may want to complete this inventory before you depart for your next study abroad experience. Or you can fill it out by indicating which strategies you think you *will likely* use in a variety of situations.

In-Country Strategies

Strategies I (will likely) use to adjust to a new culture and cope with culture shock:	I use this strategy and like it	I have tried this strategy and would use it again	I've never used this strategy but am interested in it	This strategy doesn't fit for me
8. Explain my cross-cultural experiences (the good *and* the difficult) to my family and friends at home.	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. Consider what my friends living in the host country say about people from my own culture, using what I know about cultural bias.	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. Strive to keep myself physically healthy.	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. Assume that some moments of "culture shock" are normal culture learning experiences and not worry about them too much.	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. Use a variety of coping strategies when I feel I have "culture shock overload."	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. Keep reasonable expectations of my ability to adjust to the new culture given the amount of time of my stay and my particular study abroad program.	☐	☐	☐	☐

For more information on strategies for cross-cultural adjustment and culture shock, see pages 83-99 in the Students' Guide.

Strategies for dealing with difficult times in the new culture:				
14. Keep in touch with friends and family back home by writing letters and e-mails.	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. Keep a journal or a diary about my experiences.	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. Participate in sports and other activities while abroad.	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. Find someone from my own culture to talk to about my cultural experiences.	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. Relax when I'm stressed out in my host country by doing what I normally do back home to make myself comfortable.	☐	☐	☐	☐

For more information on strategies for dealing with difficult times in the new culture, see pages 83-99 in the Students' Guide.

Strategies for making judgments about another culture:				
19. Observe the behavior of people from my host country very carefully.	☐	☐	☐	☐
20. Analyze things that happen in my host country that seem strange to me from as many perspectives as I can.	☐	☐	☐	☐
21. Consider my own cultural biases when trying to understand another culture.	☐	☐	☐	☐
22. Refrain from making quick judgments about another culture.	☐	☐	☐	☐

For more information on strategies for making cultural judgments, see pages 59-68, 69-73, and 101-113 in the Students' Guide.

	I use this strategy and like it	I have tried this strategy and would use it again	I've never used this strategy but am interested in it	This strategy doesn't fit for me
Strategies for communicating with people from another culture:				
23. Don't assume that everyone from the same culture is the same.	☐	☐	☐	☐
24. Investigate common areas of miscommunication between people from my host culture and my own culture through books and by talking to other people who know the two cultures well.	☐	☐	☐	☐
25. Read local newspapers to better understand the current political and social issues in my host country.	☐	☐	☐	☐
26. Build relations with local people by finding opportunities to spend time with them.	☐	☐	☐	☐
27. Help people in my host country understand me by explaining my behaviors and attitudes in terms of my personality and culture.	☐	☐	☐	☐

For more information on communicating with people from another culture, see pages 121-127 in the Students' Guide.

Strategies to deal with different communication styles:				
28. Consider using different types of communication styles when talking with someone from a different culture.	☐	☐	☐	☐
29. Try a different approach when my communication style doesn't seem to be working well.	☐	☐	☐	☐
30. Listen to whether my conversation partners are indirect or direct in their communication styles.	☐	☐	☐	☐
31. Mirror the communication style of my conversation partners (i.e., if they are always indirect, I try to be indirect too).	☐	☐	☐	☐
32. Respect the way people from other cultures express their emotions.	☐	☐	☐	☐
33. Refrain from disagreeing right away so that I have a chance to listen to what others are trying to communicate.	☐	☐	☐	☐

For more information on dealing with different communication styles, see pages 121-127 in the Students' Guide.

	I use this strategy and like it	I have tried this strategy and would use it again	I've never used this strategy but am interested in it	This strategy doesn't fit for me
Strategies to understand nonverbal communication in another culture:				
34. Learn about the ways in which people in my host country use nonverbal communication.	☐	☐	☐	☐
35. Examine how my own nonverbal communication is influenced by my culture.	☐	☐	☐	☐
36. Observe which nonverbal communication differences are most difficult for me to adjust to in my host country.	☐	☐	☐	☐
37. Practice using a variety of different nonverbal communication patterns.	☐	☐	☐	☐
38. Figure out how far people stand from each other in my host country and try to keep the "right" distance from others.	☐	☐	☐	☐
39. Observe the gestures that people use in my host country.	☐	☐	☐	☐
40. Ask friends in my host country to explain the meaning of different gestures to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐
41. Try to use eye contact in a way that is appropriate in my host country.	☐	☐	☐	☐

For more information on nonverbals, see pages 129-138 in the Students' Guide.

Strategies to interact with people in the host culture:				
42. Join clubs or organizations of people who have interests like mine.	☐	☐	☐	☐
43. Ask people in my host country about their perceptions of my country and culture.	☐	☐	☐	☐
44. Go to the market in my host country and interact with people in the shops.	☐	☐	☐	☐
45. Hold back on making judgments of other people based on my first impressions.	☐	☐	☐	☐

For more information on host natives, see pages 83-99 in the Students' Guide.

Strategies to use with my homestay family:				
46. Find out from my homestay family what I can do to help around the house.	☐	☐	☐	☐
47. Ask my homestay family about smoking rules in the house and observe those rules if I smoke or invite over friends who smoke.	☐	☐	☐	☐
48. Get permission before bringing someone to my homestay family's house.	☐	☐	☐	☐
49. Share pictures of my own family with my homestay family.	☐	☐	☐	☐
50. Teach games common in my own country to my homestay family.	☐	☐	☐	☐
51. Enlist the help of a friend in my host country when I have a conflict with my homestay family to help me understand the situation.	☐	☐	☐	☐
52. Figure out the "rules of the house" for eating, using the bathroom, dressing around the house, and helping out by observing and asking questions.	☐	☐	☐	☐
53. Ask my host family about their views on privacy and being alone rather than assume that we share the same views.	☐	☐	☐	☐

For more information on homestays, see pages 75-82 in the Students' Guide.

Post-Study-Abroad

Strategies to use when I return home:	I use this strategy and like it	I have tried this strategy and would use it again	I've never used this strategy but am interested in it	This strategy doesn't fit for me
54. Find a group of people who have had similar study abroad experiences to talk to and share experiences.	☐	☐	☐	☐
55. Participate in activities sponsored by study abroad and international groups back home.	☐	☐	☐	☐
56. Take a language class that will help me keep up with the language of the country I studied in (if appropriate) and/or take classes on subjects I became interested in during my study abroad adventure.	☐	☐	☐	☐
57. Volunteer for an international organization or work with international students.	☐	☐	☐	☐
58. Share my feelings and experiences with friends and family, without expecting that they will relate to all that I say.	☐	☐	☐	☐
59. Try to keep connected with friends I made while studying abroad.	☐	☐	☐	☐
60. Give myself time to readjust to my own country.	☐	☐	☐	☐

For more information on returning home, see pages 143-159 in the Students' Guide.

MAXIMIZING STUDY ABROAD

Program Professionals' Guide

Section III:
Students' Language and Culture Learning and Development

My students have typically never been to another country before. They are excited about studying abroad, of course, but also are a bit naïve about what to expect in terms of how little they will be able to communicate with just two years of a language. They also hold some pretty stereotypical views of the host country. Certainly the length of their stay makes a big difference in whether or not they break through the language barriers and these stereotypes. But so do individual differences in their approach to the experience.

My students have traveled quite extensively and are fairly knowledgeable about culture differences. At least it seems this way on the surface. What I do notice is that when they confront a really challenging difference, say in how a faculty member approaches teaching or in what their host family expects from them, they seem to reject these individuals as too demanding or not accommodating enough. Are my students as savvy as they think they are?

My students are all over the place. Some seem more interested in simply getting out of the U.S. and some are very dedicated and have studied the language and culture for years. Some are heritage students – those who have a direct ethnic connection with the host culture – who sometimes have an intimate knowledge of the culture but yet face complicated issues while overseas. And they all come to orientation at the same time! ~ study abroad professionals

The above comments from study abroad program professionals reflect the range in students' attitudes and preparation for study abroad and the challenge of assessing that preparedness. No doubt you have used your intuitive skills and experience to make an assessment of how prepared a student is for study abroad. You may also have a careful selection process that ensures a student and a program are an excellent match. As you might expect, receiving good grades in a university foreign language class or intercultural communication course does not necessarily mean that a student is well prepared for study abroad. Although it may seem straightforward to evaluate a student's foreign language ability, the evaluation tools used are often more a measure of familiarity with grammar rather than the ability to actually use the language. Perhaps even more difficult to assess is where a student is in the culture-learning process. This section is designed to assist you in your assessment of students and in your ability to help students develop their language and cultural skills.

This section contains a wide range of materials helpful for study abroad professionals in day-to-day workings with students. Part I includes an overview of the surveys (learning styles and language and culture learning and use strategies) to be used with students, providing you additional information on how to facilitate these surveys and use the information in your program design. Part II discusses Kolb's learning theory and how key aspects of the theory can be applied to study abroad. Part III provides a brief overview of the critical concept of intercultural communication competence. Part IV introduces Bennett's model of balancing content and process, an invaluable tool for all international educators designing programs for students. In Part V, we provide you with Paige's Intensity Factors Index so you can assess the intensity of the specific study abroad experiences you offer your students and can then consider ways in which to best prepare your students. The section concludes with Part VI and the discussion of Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity and specific suggestions on how to understand and work with students' current levels of intercultural sensitivity.

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PART I:

Using Learning Styles to Facilitate Culture and Language Learning

We all learn in different ways. Think back to a class you took in which you felt successful. What was most helpful for you in mastering the material – attending class lectures, the readings, taking copious notes, engaging in small group discussions? Which learning methods and environments did you prefer, and which ones didn't you care for as much?

While there can be enormous variation in what helps each of us learn effectively, being aware of our own style preferences and most importantly of our students, helps us prepare them to take advantage of their strengths and weaknesses – especially in new learning environments.

In this section, you will be introduced to the concept of learning styles. Research suggests that the greater the number of styles students can use, the more successful they will be at learning language and culture. Research also shows that we all have learning-style preferences and thus tend to limit the ways in which we learn to our preferred approaches. You can assist students by getting them to think about learning in strategic terms and to expand their learning approaches. You can also help them by providing opportunities during orientation or in country to learn in different ways.

Note that the goal in having you understand students' learning style preferences is for you to be able to assist students in their learning. This does not mean that you as program staff or faculty must change the way you teach or run your program by entirely changing your pedagogy to adapt to your students' styles. Rather, the main goal is for students to be aware of their own preferences so they can best adapt to the environment. The secondary goal addressed here is that you may decide to make some changes in your teaching and program presentations in order to be teaching to the range of styles present in your students.

To begin, we revisit the learning style preferences from Cohen, Oxford, and Chi's (2002) survey. Please take a moment to review the following charts and reflect upon where your students may fall, indicating the percentage of your students demonstrating a preference in the left column. Don't be overwhelmed by the details in the chart; some of you may know your students well and others may need to make quick guesses – the goal is simply to gain an overall sense of where your students might fall. Then, using the information from the hints and support column as a starting point, think about what you can do to assist these learners so that they gain the most from their culture- and language-learning experiences.

Sensory / Perceptual Learning Styles

Percent of My Students Demonstrating this Style	Styles and Characteristics	Hints and Support
1A: **Visual**	Prefers charts, graphs, something to read, or a picture.	This learner may be assisted by the simple use of flash cards, videos, or other visual aids.
1B: **Tactile / Kinesthetic**	Prefers aids that can be touched, manipulated, written, and may practice language by drawing and/or tracing.	This learner needs hands-on experiences to understand language and culture (e.g., cultural interchanges using nonverbal communication strategies).
1C: **Auditory**	Prefers listening to lectures, conversations, tapes, etc. when learning.	This learner may appear less active than more vocal students but is learning by attentive listening in class.

Psychological Type (personality)

Percent of My Students Demonstrating this Style	Styles and Characteristics	Hints and Support
2A: **Extraverted**	Energized by outside world; is active, interaction-oriented, and outgoing; has broad interests; tends to reflect later (motto: "Live it, then understand it").	Make available a wide range of social, interactive learning tasks (games, conversations, discussions, debates, role-plays, simulations).
2B: **Introverted**	Energized by inner world; prefers concentration; focuses on thoughts and concepts; has fewer interests, but deep ones; likes to be reflective (motto: "Understand it, then live it").	Encourage these learners to do more independent work (studying or reading by themselves or learning with the computer) or working with one other person they know well.
3A: **Random-Intuitive**	Likes finding the big picture; enjoys formal model-building and abstract terms; focuses on the future; looks for possibilities; random access (ask for 5 examples, gives 4 or 6 instead)	Encourage them to get involved in more future-oriented activities that call for language – such as speculating about possibilities and enjoying abstract thinking – and avoid step-by-step instruction.
3B: **Concrete-Sequential**	Likes to work in a step-by-step manner; follows directions carefully; tends to be linear and sensory-oriented; focuses on the here and now; concrete-sequential (ask for 5 examples, gives exactly 5)	Suggest that these learners perform tasks on a one-step-at-a-time basis and suggest ways they can get ongoing feedback every step of the way – such as from their peers, their teachers, or natives out of class.

4A: Closure-Oriented	Decision maker; takes action in the world; loves to make lists and follow them; wants immediate closure and control; has a low tolerance for ambiguity; often jumps to conclusions by wanting to know answers right away; tends to be hard-working and decisive; sees deadlines as helpful.	Encourage them to plan ahead and to make deadlines for themselves and to stick to these. Also encourage them to get specific directions so they can accomplish tasks more efficiently.
4B: Open-Oriented	Information gatherer; likes to take in lots of information and experience before making a decision; thinks learning should be fun; can make work into play; might makes lists, but doesn't check off each item; tends to be flexible and open to change; has a high tolerance for ambiguity; sees deadlines as artificial and arbitrary.	Encourage them to indulge in discovery learning (in which they are likely to pick up information naturally). Wherever possible, support them in relaxing and enjoying their learning without concern for deadlines or rules.

Cognitive Learning Styles

Percent of My Students Demonstrating this Style	Styles and Characteristics	Hints and Support
5A: Global	These learners enjoy getting the main idea and are comfortable communicating even if they don't know all the words or concepts.	Encourage them to go for the gist in understanding what is said or written. Support them in seeing that sometimes the particulars are not so crucial for understanding the message.
5B: Particular	These learners focus more on details and remember specific information about a topic well.	Support them by suggesting they use their attention to particulars by gathering details in the task at hand. They may also need to be supported in stretching to see the gist as well.
6A: Synthesizing	Prefers synthesis over analysis; likes to look at the larger picture; likes to guess and consider possibilities; can converse without knowing all the words; sensitive to socio-emotional content.	Encourage them to summarize material since they are prone to do this well. In addition, they can be encouraged to guess meanings and predict outcomes since their ability to integrate material gives them skills for doing this.
6B: Analytic	Likes to think and analyze; prefers contrastive analysis and discrimination exercises; not necessarily sensitive to social/affective factors (tends to avoid social and emotional subtleties); often focuses on grammar rules and generalizations.	Suggest that they look for tasks that allow them to pull ideas apart, perform logical analysis and contrastive tasks. It is likely that these learners enjoy focusing on grammar rules, so if they don't have a good grammar book, they should probably be advised to purchase one.

7A: **Sharpener**	Notices differences and seeks distinctions among items as they commit material to memory. Retrieves the because they store them separately and can distinguish among speech sounds, grammatical forms, and fine distinctions of meaning.	Since these learners really enjoy making the fine distinctions right at the outset of learning, they should be encouraged to allow themselves plenty of time during their initial learning of material. If not, they might find themselves frustrated by all they have to learn.
7B: **Leveler**	Clumps material together in order to remember it, by eliminating or reducing differences and by focusing almost exclusively on similarities. May ignore distinctions that promote accuracy in a given social context. Tend to blur similar memories and to merge new experiences readily with previous ones.	These learners are likely to be those who just want to start communicating, without worrying about the niceties of language and structure. Support this approach because it may certainly provide for plenty of language contact situations. Also, it may be wise to counsel these students to style stretch a bit to allow for some attention to structural fine points as well.
8A: **Deductive**	Likes to go from the general to the specific, to apply generalizations to experience, and to start with rules and theories rather than with specific examples.	Encourage these learners to use both grammar of the language and other materials that lay down the rules. They could also find partners who can help explain rules to them when the grammar text doesn't help.
8B: **Inductive**	Likes to go from specific to general and prefers to begin with examples rather than rules or theories.	Support these learners in going about the learning of rules more intuitively without focusing on the rules.
9A: **Field-Dependent**	Needs context in order to focus and understand something; takes each language part one at a time.	Such learners find it helpful to do tasks that let them focus on just some material at a time. It may, for example, help for them to be able to converse with natives without being corrected every moment.
9B: **Field-Independent**	Able to handle the language parts as well as the whole without being distracted.	Such learners have facility at separating or abstracting material from within a given context, even in the presence of distractions so they can be encouraged to take on tasks that call for doing multiple checking and cross-checking, without getting confused.
10A: **Impulsive**	Processes material at a high speed with low accuracy; often takes risks and guesses.	These may be the learners who are willing to speak without planning everything out in advance and could be encouraged to do even more of it.

10B: Reflective	Processes material at a low speed with high accuracy; avoids risks and guessing	These learners could be encouraged to take their time and do it right, since this appeals to them. They may enjoy listening more than talking.
11A: Metaphoric	Learns material more effectively if they conceptualize aspects of it, such as the grammar system, in metaphorical terms.	They could be encouraged to make the material more comprehensible by developing and applying an extended metaphor to it (e.g., visualizing the grammar system of a given language as an engine that can be assembled and disassembled).
11B: Literal	They prefer a relatively literal representation of concepts and like to work with language material more or less as it is on the surface.	These learners could be encouraged to simply go about the task of learning language without attempting to envision the language system at some theoretical level.

Cohen, Oxford, and Chi (2002).
The global-particular, synthesizing-analytic, and metaphoric-literal distinctions were suggested by Madeline Ehrman (Leaver & Ehrman, 2002).

Using the Language Strategy Use Inventory and Index

In addition to different learning styles, students will also possess different preferences for the strategies they use in learning foreign languages. Language learning and use strategies are covered extensively in the Students' Guide, but it is important for you as a program professional to recognize that students may tend to favor a few strategies over others. Some students, for example, may like to make word associations for learning vocabulary, while others prefer to practice using the new phrase or expression in a written or spoken sentence. In many cases, students will rely on the same strategies for language learning simply because this is what they are used to. Here is where you can make a significant contribution by encouraging students to explore different strategies so they will have a number of possible strategies from which to choose.

One way to help students try new strategies is to encourage them to take the Language Strategy Use Inventory and Index (which is on p. 16 of the Students' Guide). As previously stated, you should begin by taking this inventory (see p. 17 of this guide or go to Section VII, p. B-1 for a copy you can use with students). If you have not studied a foreign language recently, think back to when you studied it in the past. This survey is organized by skill area – listening, vocabulary, speaking, reading, writing, and translation. If one of your students is frustrated with learning language and isn't making reasonable progress, you could use this survey to help determine the skill areas that are perhaps in need of bolstering. For this student, you can recommend sections in the Students' Guide that deal with those strategy areas. While some of the skill areas are going to be familiar to the student, such as strategies for enhancing vocabulary learning, other areas, such as translation, may be new to them. The concern here is to recognize when and to what extent students are engaging in translation and then to have them see whether perhaps more or less translation may support their language learning efforts more effectively. For example, some students lean on translation strategies as a crutch and don't let themselves simply experience the new language in its own target-language context. Others could perhaps benefit from a well-placed translation from time to time in order to improve their written or oral communication.

Using the Culture-Learning Strategies Inventory and Index

As discussed earlier, it is extremely difficult to pinpoint exactly how one learns about a specific culture and how one learns to be culturally sensitive. Yet certain skills and an openness to learning are critical prerequisites to effective culture learning. This "Culture-Learning Strategies Inventory and Index" offers a detailed list of specific, individual strategies associated with the critical skills and openness involved in culture learning. As a result, the index provides students an opportunity not only to consider strategies that they may currently use, but also exposes them to strategies they may not be aware of or that they previously have dismissed.

This index is also meant to entice students to look further into the Students' Guide and to evaluate their own strategies for continued cultural learning. It is easy for anyone to assume "we have arrived" at a high level of intercultural sensitivity. However, because the Inventory and Index details specific strategies others have used to be successful in intercultural interactions, taking the inventory can heightens one's awareness of some tangible strategies they are using – and one's they could be.

Thus, as suggested above, one way to help students try new strategies is to encourage them to take this inventory. The survey is organized according to pre-departure, in-country, and post-study abroad strategies. Having your students take the survey not only assists students with knowing where to begin their work in the Students' Guide, it can also assist you in understanding the depth of the students' current strategies for successful cultural learning and how you should focus your own instructional time with them. For example, if many of your students indicate that for number 6 (Make distinctions between behavior that is personal, cultural, and universal) that they "use this strategy and like it," you can quickly cover this material in a pre-departure orientation and spend more time on another strategy for which your students indicate that they have "tried it and would like to use it again" or "I've never used this strategy but am interested in it." For both of these categories, students will need more exposure to the underlying concepts involved and practice in using the specific strategy.

A full copy of the Culture-Learning Strategies Inventory and Index for you to use with your students can be found in Section VII, p. C-1 of this guide.

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PART II:

Taking Students Through the Learning Cycle

In this section, we will provide detail on Kolb's learning cycle (1999), which we have found to be very relevant to study abroad. As educators ourselves, we believe that Kolb's theory is extremely valuable for the following reasons:

- Knowing where students prefer to enter the learning process is critical to assisting students in their learning.
- Learning is maximized when students complete at least one full cycle of learning rather than remain in one learning mode.
- Study abroad provides an ideal environment for taking students through the learning cycle.

The first step in using this model is to understand the four different learning preferences identified by Kolb. While there is some overlap with the learning-style preferences in Part I, it is helpful to understand this model separately as the components work in conjunction with one another to complete a cycle of learning.

The Four Learning Preferences and Their Learning Strengths	
Concrete Experience (CE) This style emphasizes personal involvement with people in everyday situations. You would tend to rely more on your feelings than on a systematic approach to problems and situations. In a learning situation, you would rely on your ability to be open-minded and adaptable to change. Who your contacts are abroad is very important to you. You want to meet your overseas adviser, faculty, and host family as soon as possible. You will frequently turn to these individuals for advice.	**Learning from Feeling** • Learning from specific experiences and intuition • Relating to people • Being sensitive to feelings and people
Reflective Observation (RO) With this style, ideas and situations are understood from diverse viewpoints. In a learning situation you would rely on patience, objectivity, and careful judgment. You would rely on your own thoughts and feelings in forming opinions. You may prefer time in the host country before going on field trips. You want to become familiar with the area before you explore further. You may challenge others to think of new perspectives and ways to look at the host country.	**Learning by Watching and Listening** • Carefully observing before making judgments • Viewing issues from different perspectives • Looking for the meaning of things
Abstract Conceptualization (AC) Learning involves using logic and ideas, rather than feelings, to understand problems or situations. You would rely on systematic planning and develop theories and ideas to solve problems. You would prefer not to do role plays or simulations in pre-departure and on-site orientation. You are more comfortable with lectures about ideas.	**Learning by Thinking** • Logically analyzing ideas • Systematic planning • Acting on an intellectual understanding of a situation
Active Experimentation (AE) Learning takes an active form – experimenting with trying to influence or change situations. You would be concerned with what actually works rather than simply observing a situation. You place great value in getting tasks accomplished and in seeing the results of your influence and ingenuity. You would prefer to jump right in and skip orientation! You prefer to experience things first, then read or learn more about them.	**Learning by Doing** • Ability to get things done • Risk-taking • Influencing people and events through action

Let's say that one of your students is faced with a specific problem: She feels that her host family is being too restrictive about how late she stays out at night. How this student goes about collecting information to resolve the problem will depend upon several things: her experience, her approach to conflict, her language skills, and her preferred approach to learning.

- A ***concrete experiencer's*** first reaction may be to go to a person she trusts to find out if she is being treated the same as others and to learn how others have handled similar problems.
- A ***reflective observer*** is more likely to try to collect opinions from various parties – not necessarily those of the host family themselves. She may speak with other students, other families, faculty, and program staff.
- An ***abstract conceptualizer*** is apt to try to look immediately for deeper explanations of the family's behavior. These explanations will frequently reflect the worldview and experiences of the student. For example, an abstract conceptualizer who is a feminist may look for an explanation involving gender roles.
- An ***active experimenter*** is actually likely to take action before information is collected. This action could be a range of behaviors, including talking directly with the family about the problem, asking program staff for a change in families, or even moving out and staying with another family before notifying the program staff.

Keep in mind

- This model is not meant to label students, but to give you information to better understand their strengths and weaknesses.
- All learning styles are important to the students' educational development while abroad, but generally, students will prefer or be stronger in one or two styles than in others.
- Students need to be aware of their own learning style preferences and also the styles they lack skills in so that they can best learn the target language.
- Study abroad professionals who understand that their students will differ in how they best learn can point students toward learning methods that optimize and expand upon their abilities. However, the main benefit to understanding learning styles is to help your students to make adaptations when the need arises.

What to do with this information?

Use it to determine what the learning preferences of your students might be. Then, consider:

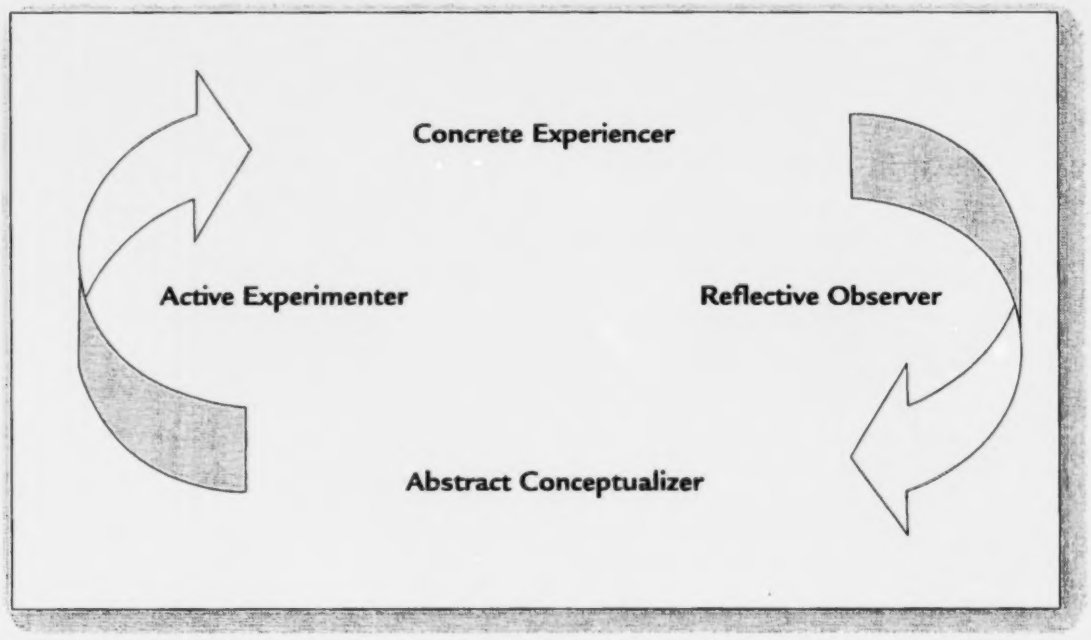
- Are their preferences a good fit with the teaching methods they will experience? If no, how can you help the students be prepared for a style of teaching that does not match their learning preference?
- How might their preference be a good fit or not with the culture of the institution, the study abroad program, and the host country? For example, in what contexts might an active experimenter be likely to break cultural rules? A reflective observer?
- In a study abroad environment, much of the learning takes place outside of the classroom and will involve a great deal of hands-on learning. Students who have spent most of their education in the classroom may not be accustomed to learning in this manner. How can you assist them to maximize learning?
- Are there ways that you could adapt your program to meet all four learning styles?

No single mode entirely describes someone's learning style. This is because each person's learning style is a combination of the four basic learning modes. Because of this, we are often pulled in several directions in a learning situation. Read the following section on the learning cycle to learn

more about helping students take advantage of this pull by leading students through the learning cycle.

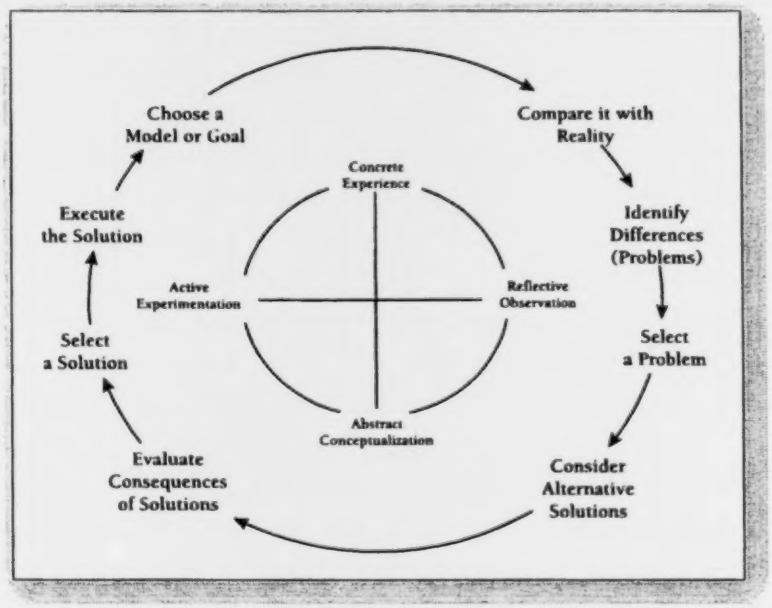
The learning cycle

As mentioned earlier, a learning style is a preference for where students are most comfortable entering the learning. The following wheel depicts how Kolb's four styles fit together:



In an ideal learning environment that maximizes the capacity to learn, a student has the opportunity to utilize all four styles. For example, in the scenario where a student was unhappy with her host family's restrictions, you could enter the cycle at various points. You could encourage the student to begin with reflective observation and the collection of alternative explanations. Then, you ask the student to consider additional cultural theories that may shed light on the situation. Next, you encourage the student to take action in some way. Finally, you may encourage the student to develop a stronger relationship with the family so that they can be a better source of information and support in the future.

The following model from Kolb expresses the formal relationship of the learning styles directly to a problem-solving model.



The materials on pages 37-40 are adapted from Kolb's Learning Style Inventory. Copyright 1999, 1993, 1985, 1981, 1976. Experienced Based Learning Systems, Inc. All rights reserved. Developed by David A. Kolb. Distributed by the Hay Group, MA.

Our endorsement of Kolb's theory and learning cycle is based on our own experiences that the model is helpful for us and for fellow practitioners. Note that while we support its use for considering how best to work with students and how to help students adapt to new learning environments, there has been some criticism as to both the reliability and the validity of the Learning Style Inventory *as an assessment tool (see Riding and Rayner, 1998, p. 57).*

The learning cycle and study abroad

The study abroad experience is a continual process of learning, as students are confronted with new phenomena and information that they must somehow process. The way in which problems are solved in the host country often necessitates that the student go through the entire learning cycle. However, sometimes students get stuck in their preferred learning style mode and do not complete the learning cycle on their own. You can use Kolb's learning cycle with students to help them realize where they are stuck and where they may need to expand into realms that are less comfortable for them.

Activity for program professionals

The first step in helping students is for you to be able to identify how a particular learner might approach a problem and what are strengths and weaknesses of that approach.

Consider Joshua's iron story (p. 42 of the Students' Guide or Section VII, p. E-1 of this guide). Write down what a student in the various categories might do to solve this problem.

Concrete Experience (CE) Solves problems using intuition and feelings for others:	This student would likely approach this problem by: • • • •	Strength and weakness of this approach:
Reflective Observation (RO) Solves problems using powers of observation and considering all angles:	This student would likely approach this problem by: • • • •	Strength and weakness of this approach:
Abstract Conceptualization (AC) Solves problems by analyzing information:	This student would likely approach this problem by: • • • •	Strength and weakness of this approach:
Active Experimentation (AE) Solves problems by "jumping right in" and doing something:	This student would likely approach this problem by: • • • •	Strength and weakness of this approach:

Suggested answers

Concrete Experience (CE) Solves problems using intuition and feelings for others:	This student would likely approach this problem by: • getting advice from friends. • talking to a program professional	Strength and weakness of this approach: Strength: Seeking alternative points of view. Weakness: Friends or program coordinator may not be able to give helpful advice about the culture. Student still may not take action.
Reflective Observation (RO) Solves problems using powers of observation and considering all angles:	This student would likely approach this problem by: • not acting right away and seeing what further develops in the relationship with the host mom. • writing a journal entry to give himself a chance to think more about this.	Strength and weakness of this approach: Strength: May develop very good reflective skills and has material to go back to review. Weakness: Student may not really know how to take action and may develop too many possibilities, resulting in paralysis.
Abstract Conceptualization (AC) Solves problems by analyzing information:	This student would likely approach this problem by: • thinking about cultural and personality explanations. • may bringing up the example in a class and asking for an instructors' perception of the problem.	Strength and weakness of this approach: Strength: Is developing capacity for deeper understanding of the culture. Weakness: Student may understand that action is necessary but may not have behavioral skills to be successful.
Active Experimentation (AE) Solves problems by "jumping right in" and doing something:	This student would likely approach this problem by: • asking the host mom what went wrong. • going out and fixing the iron immediately.	Strength and weakness of this approach: Strength: Creates opportunity to learn through the experience. Weakness: Student may do too much leaping before looking and may not develop deeper cultural understanding.

Helping the student through the learning cycle

Let's consider a new challenge for one of your students. Nathan, who performed well at home academically, is not performing well at the study abroad location. Nathan receives nearly failing scores on a mid-term exam. He comes to you, claiming he "just cannot do well in this course and needs to drop the class." He has already selected a solution and appears ready to implement it. What can you do to assist him? Keep in mind that his first reaction may be the most appropriate solution, although it may have been reached a bit prematurely.

Note: The learning cycle may be completed during an entire stay abroad. It is unlikely that the cycle will be completed during a 45-minute discussion! Your role can be to set the stage for future learning so students can experience the cycle on their own.

On p. 40, we presented a diagram connecting learning preferences with problem solving. We now encourage you to use this chart to consider what Nathan could do in this situation. (In the future, you could give this chart to a student to consider what to do in a particular situation. A copy of this chart is in Section VII, p. HH.)

Problem: Nearly failing a mid-term	
Identifying the problem (use concrete experience skills)	I could:
Select a problem (use reflective observation skills)	I could:
Consider alternative solutions (use abstract conceptualization skills)	I could:
Evaluate consequences of solutions (use skills from all styles)	I could:
Select a solution (use skills from all styles)	I could:
Execute a solution (use active experimenter skills)	I could:

Here is one way that Nathan might fill out this sheet. You could then schedule a meeting with him to discuss his selection of the problem and his course of action.

Problem: Nearly failing a mid-term	
Identify the problem	I could consider: • Am I having language problems? • Am I having difficulty with the culture in general? • How familiar am I with the testing system? The teaching methods? • Are my expectations realistic? How are other students doing? • Could I be studying differently? • Am I partying too much and not having enough time for studying? • Am I spending too much time on weekends traveling to nearby cities and countries?
Select a problem	In order to isolate the problem I should focus on, I could: • Talk to my program coordinators and find out their perspectives, especially to problems 2, 3, 4, and 5 from above. • Talk to my language instructor and get a sense of my language skills. • Use the Students' Guide to assess areas where I could improve my language strategy and use. • Then, I could journal and talk to friends, host family members, and my program coordinator to make a decision about which might be the greatest source of the problem.
Consider alternative solutions and evaluate the consequences of solutions	I decide that there are two main problems – my language skills and my lack of familiarity with the testing and teaching methods here. I journal about the solutions and their consequences, and decide. Dropping the class: Would mean less credit transferring home. Does not sound like a good idea. The course is already paid for. To improve I am going to look for a tutor who can help me with understanding the tests, the culture, and the language.
Select a solution	Talk to friends, family, and staff to figure out if finding a tutor is realistic.
Execute a solution	I could let fellow students in the class know I am looking for a tutor, or talk to the instructor about getting a tutor and post a sign.

For further assistance, go to the following pages in the Students' Guide:
- Considering alternatives: The Values Chart (p. 69) and the Description - Interpretation - Evaluation (D-I-E) Model (p. 110)
- Evaluating solutions: Journaling (p. 115) and Phases of Cultural Awareness (p. 96).
- Executing a solution: Communication Styles (p. 124)

In concluding, it is our hope that your understanding of learning styles and the cycle of learning can help you to:

- understand that study abroad is an excellent vehicle for learning precisely because it offers students an opportunity to engage in a full cycle of learning.
- encourage students to enter the learning where they are most comfortable.

- challenge students to engage in a full learning cycle, not just stay in their comfort zone.
- understand students' learning styles in order to structure appropriate activities throughout their study abroad experience.
- model various styles for students so that they can recognize benefits of various styles.
- help students expand their own learning styles.
- prepare students for teaching styles in their host country.

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PART III:

The Goal: Defining and Understanding Intercultural Communicative Competence

Learning to really use another language means much more than stringing words together in a way that is grammatically correct. It means knowing when it's OK to be late. And if an apology is necessary, what to say. It means knowing when you can be direct and when it's best to be silent. This is what distinguishes one as having intercultural communicative competence.
~ Barbara Kappler

Objectives

This section will help you:

- understand key components involved in intercultural communication competence.
- learn what skills are important for students to have for a study abroad experience.
- see how intercultural communication engages the whole person.

Communicating with others is one of the most fundamental things we do. Whether it be through spoken or written language, body language, or through our use of silence, we are communicating something to those around us. When we find ourselves with those who differ significantly in terms of language and culture, however, many of the unspoken rules of communication that we tend to take for granted no longer work. In a sense, we have to start over in a new culture to relearn to communicate in a way that is appropriate in the host environment. How do people respond when they encounter people who have different means of communication than what they have learned? Using the local language is a huge step toward being able to communicate, but also understanding the behavior, attitudes, and motives of individuals provides us with tools we can use in becoming better intercultural communicators.

In short, intercultural communicative competence requires the integration and utilization of both language and culture. Much of the material in the Students' Guide is devoted to encouraging students to think about language and cultural in a holistic sense, and the text, activities, and exercises are designed to help them build skills in communicating across cultures.

This chapter is designed to help you in your role as program professional to deepen your understanding of the factors important to intercultural communicative competence. Such an understanding will aid you in your assessment of students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes before, during, and after their study abroad experience.

Definitions of intercultural communicative competence

Gudykunst and Kim (2003) define intercultural communication as a "transactional, symbolic process involving the attribution of meaning between people from different cultures" (p. 17). We support the authors' view that

> *virtually anything can be a symbol – written words, spoken words, gestures, facial expressions, flags, and so forth....the important thing to remember is that symbols are symbols only because a group of people agree to consider them as such* (p. 5).

Competence means that people are able to adapt their behaviors to bridge these cultural differences.

Even scholars don't agree on the set of skills needed for intercultural communication competence or how to measure these skills. Conceptualizations of intercultural competence, or the evaluation of an individual's performance, have typically focused on the ability to be appropriate and/or effective in a different culture as viewed from the perspective of the visitor and/or the host (for reviews, see Chen & Starosta, 1998; Martin, 1989). While there is no definitive agreement in the field, we find the following components from Young Yun Kim's (1988, 2001) model to be the most comprehensive as it is based on a person's intercultural adaptability to a new environment. We have selected a few key elements here for you to get a sense of this model.

The Components of ICC

1. Knowledge of the host communication system – language and nonverbal behavior
This is perhaps the most critical aspect of host communication competence. According to Kim (2001), "Any language is a veil over the reality of a culture based on an agreement among the users about what there is to be seen and how it should be seen.... It enables strangers to access the accumulated records of the host culture...." (pp. 100-101)

Students will also need to learn nonverbal behavior patterns of the host culture together with the host language if they are to become competent communicators. Many embarrassing and awkward moments are bound to occur as long as students lack the knowledge and skills necessary to perform nonverbals. The Students' Guide covers nonverbal communication beginning on p. 129.

2. Cognitive Complexity
Students and others who travel abroad for the first time will tend to rely on stereotypes to categorize the things they see and the situations they encounter (for more information, see *When in Rome* in the Students' Guide beginning on p. 53). As students learn more about the host culture, they become aware of the role culture plays in particular situations, and their perceptions become more refined and complex, allowing them to detect variations and nuances in the host environment. Cognitive complexity is the way that this cultural knowledge based on time and experience is structured and influences students' thoughts and ideas about the culture. Research links cognitive complexity with key factors of successful adaptation (Kim, 2001).

3. Affective Competence
Not only must students acquire the ability to understand the complexity of this new environment, they must also develop the emotional desire to successfully adapt to the host environment. According to Kim,

> *At the heart of affective competence are strangers' attitudes toward the host environment and toward themselves. Strangers who feel positive and respectful toward local people tend to maintain less psychological distance from them than do those who may resent or have little genuine interest in understanding them. In addition, strangers often lack affective competence when they feel insecure, ambivalent, or confused about their own identity or feel marginal because of the sense that they are rejected by the native members of the host environment* (2001, pp. 108-109).

In other words, they need to want to learn about the culture and participate as best they can. This often neglected component of intercultural communicative competence is examined here in terms of three main aspects:

a. *Adaptive motivation or the willingness to participate in the host culture*
Some students abroad may be naturally motivated language and culture learners, but some of them won't be. How much students participate in communication with hosts will depend on how they envision their relationship with the host environment. Students, thinking of their short-term visit abroad as temporary, may decide not to make a serious motivational commitment to adaptation. With little motivation to adapt, students will miss out on the opportunity to learn the host communication and culture.

b. *Identity flexibility*
A flexible identity orientation allows students not only to be open to a more fluid interpretation of themselves; it also allows them to be less rigid in their expectations of their hosts. Student who are flexible in their identity are likely to be more positive when they are actively participating in the culture as well as when they can't enter in and will accept a greater range in host nationals' behaviors.

c. *Aesthetic/emotional appreciation*
Mansell (1981) emphasized the importance of the aesthetic fulfillment of individuals in a foreign culture: "The concept of aesthetic awareness is linked with ineffable, intuitive feelings of appreciation and celebration." A student may or may not already have this type of appreciation for the host country. If not, you could recommend that students explore an activity they are already interested in (e.g., film, painting, music, or sports) and have them check out what the host country has to offer, which may help them develop a sense of deeper appreciation for the culture.

4. Behavioral competence
Another key component to intercultural communicative competence is the ability to express one's thoughts and emotions through appropriate behavior. Students initially learning the host language, for example, often go through a mental "rehearsal" before speaking, but no longer need to do so as they become proficient in the language. As proficiency is gained, knowing culturally appropriate ways to behave becomes essential.

Adapted from Kim (1988, 2001).

As you can see, the competencies listed above are interrelated, and normally, for a person in their own country, the above communicative competencies are well coordinated and balanced. Students going abroad, however, may tend to lack one or more of these skills. For example, a student may be very knowledgeable about the host culture language yet still may find it difficult to understand why the hosts behave as they do. Thus, the student lacks full behavioral competence. Another student may be knowledgeable and capable of participating in the emotional experiences of the host nationals but may be unable to successfully communicate through verbal and nonverbal behavior.

It is important that students acquire a deep understanding of the connection between their knowledge, attitudes, behavior, and feelings toward the host country because this will impact their ability to communicate with hosts. It is also important for students to recognize that developing intercultural communicative competence is an integrative and lengthy process that will entail certain changes on the part of the individual. Study abroad professionals can play an active role in making students more aware of the components of intercultural communicative competence and of the value and benefits of communicating effectively with people in the host country.

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PART IV:

The Pedagogy: Facilitating Culture and Language Learning

Objectives

This section will help you:

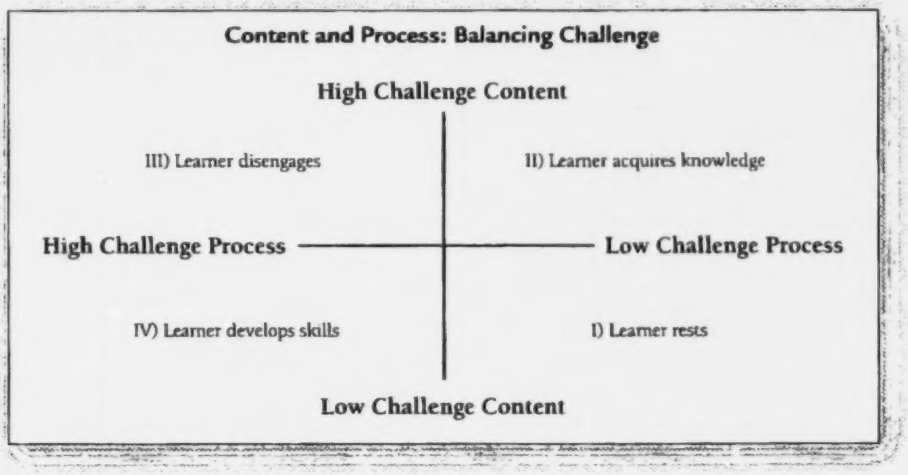
- understand students' anxieties and resistance toward learning.
- become aware of how to facilitate student learning in a way that both challenges students and supports their learning.
- learn the rudiments of debriefing intercultural training sessions.

Process and content: balancing challenge and support of learning

Using the framework of process (methods and instructor delivery) and content (curriculum and subject matter) involves an understanding of students' learning styles and how different educational methods challenge students to learn and develop. Intercultural learning – even in the context of studying abroad – is not a naturally occurring process and as such, we must consciously and intentionally help our students develop through a curriculum that both challenges and supports their learning.

In the host country, balancing and supporting students' experiences becomes even more important, as students will be required to deal with language and cultural differences on a daily basis. Some students may feel overwhelmed with their new surroundings and become withdrawn. You can help students think about their own stress levels, encouraging them to take breaks when needed, while at the same time challenging students to get the most out of their experience.

Take a look at the diagram below. Think about situations in your program that apply to each quadrant. For example, when are your students exposed to the content that is challenging but in a setting that isn't frightening or overwhelming? (Quadrant II). When are your students engaged in learning content that is more familiar to them but in a learning environment that is very challenging? (Quadrant IV).



Excerpted from Bennett, Bennett, & Allen (1999).

The model for balancing the challenges in content and process can be used for any learning situation, whether a student is learning language in a classroom or coming to grips with cultural differences in daily life in the host country. Consider this educator's experience in using the model.

> *As an international educator for thirteen years, I find this to be one of the most important models in preparing a one-hour workshop or a semester-long curriculum. For example, in working with international students coming to the U.S., I find that many have been inoculated about culture shock. If we do a lecture or discussion on culture shock, the students' eyes glaze over. The learners are resting because the process and content are low challenge. Even with an incredibly dynamic speaker, the students are apt to say, "Great speaker, but I already knew this." However, this does not mean that the students have learned everything there is to know about culture shock, cultural adjustment, and how to develop healthy strategies for coping with culture shock. In this case, a higher challenge process is needed. When we changed our curriculum to include a "cultural discovery assignment" in which students take pictures of things that surprise them, disappoint them, or make them homesick, or interview an experienced staff member about their adjustment experiences, the result is amazing. Students, when reporting back on their assignments, are now required to demonstrate a skill; they are asked to articulate, based on their own experiences or the experiences of a staff member, what cultural adjustment means to them personally. The conversations are rich for exploring cultural similarities and differences, theories about the ways cultures differ, and strategies for adjusting to a new culture. The enthusiasm and learning that take place are a far cry from the glazed-over look we experienced during the culture shock lecture and discussions. ~ Barbara Kappler*

Certainly, there may be times when it is OK and even necessary for a learner to rest, especially after periods of high challenges. And most likely there will be students who are quite advanced and will not benefit from a specific section of the orientation. However, if the majority of the program allows learners to rest, changes will need to be made in your program (perhaps by inviting advanced students to share their experiences, mentor new students, or contribute an essay to a website).

The risk of a learner disengaging is perhaps even more troubling than a learner resting. Having students "waste their time" is one thing, but having them mentally or physically check out of the learning all together can be a sign of serious problems and faulty curriculum design. For example, it is often suggested that students be involved in intercultural simulations as a vehicle for building intercultural communication skills. When done well and at the right time, skill development can be the result. However, a simulation in the very first days of arrival in a new country can be a "double whammy" for many students. They don't need intercultural differences simulated as they are already immersed in them. This is especially true if the simulation is not in their native language. Now, for advanced language students and students with prior travel experience, the simulation may work well. But for those already feeling overwhelmed, the content (whatever the goals are of the simulation) and the process (a simulation) are both challenging. As a result, the learner may disengage and may literally leave the room or may opt out of the activity and sit on the sidelines.

Keep this model in mind as you advise students about their learning goals and objectives while they are abroad. Methods of balancing challenge and support have particular application in the next sections, which cover intensity factors and the development of intercultural sensitivity. You will discover that some methods of having students learn about cultural differences are more effective than others, and that you will need to approach students differently depending on their level of intercultural sensitivity, the amount of challenge and support available, and the intensity of the intercultural environment.

Here are a few other examples of how the content and process diagram apply to study abroad:

I. Learner rests

- Learners are surrounded by fellow U.S. Americans during much of their free time.
- Learners enroll in courses that are too easy for them and the teaching method is very familiar.
- Learners have tuned out before they realize that there are differences (see Part VI on Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity).
- Learners are not challenged, nor are they challenging themselves, to use their language.

II. Learner acquires knowledge

- Learners are surrounded by host nationals during much of their free time.
- Learners enroll in courses that are challenging to them, and/or the teaching method is unfamiliar.
- Learners are tuned into the culture because staff are helping them see similarities and differences.
- Learners are challenged, and are challenging themselves, to use their language skills.
- Learners hear directly from other students about the challenges faced in study abroad.
- Learners hear from in-country professionals about the actual experiences of past students.
- Learners are challenged – in a discussion, lecture, or critical incident format – by in-country hosts to question the stereotypes they have brought with them.
- Learners are provided with semi-structured opportunities to meet host nationals and are not simply expected to meet them "on the street."

III. Learner disengages

- Learners participate in immersion experiences with no preparation, and they are not comfortable with the ambiguity and do not know how to make meaning of the situation.
- Learners participate in immersion experiences with little opportunity to debrief and make sense of the experience.
- Learners are placed in homestays with little language preparation.
- Learners do not have an opportunity to connect their study abroad experiences with their own academic, career, and personal goals.

IV. Learner develops skills

- Learners have opportunities to make meaning of their experiences through debriefing, discussions, and personal reflection time.
- Learners are emotionally and cognitively prepared for the experiences in which they are to be engaged.

We invite you to reflect upon what specific ways you can support or challenge students in their intercultural development in your own programs. We also encourage you to score your program on the "intensity factors index" in the following section. Then, consider how these factors, combined with the concepts of support and challenge, can be impacting the effectiveness of your program(s).

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PART V:

Assessing the Study Abroad Experience

Intensity Factors Index

The Intensity Factors Index is a tool for evaluating the psychological intensity of intercultural environments for your students and for designing intercultural training programs. (See the next page for descriptions of these factors.) You can use this index to evaluate specific students or to consider the "average" student in your program.

Factors	Least Intense ← → Most Intense									
1. Cultural Differences	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2. Ethnocentrism	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3. Language	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
4. Cultural Immersion	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
5. Cultural Isolation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
6. Prior Intercultural Experience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
7. Expectations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
8. Visibility/Invisibility	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9. Status	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10. Power and Control	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Overall Intensity	**Score** _____									

Adapted from Paige (1993).

- Glancing through the Students' Guide, which chapters or activities might be more problematic for students who may have some ethnocentric attitudes?
- Which activities in the Students' Guide would you be more inclined to introduce first to students and which would you save for later?
- What would you do differently for students who have more international and intercultural experience than you would for students who have little exposure to differences?

Ten Cross-Cultural Stress Factors

1. Cultural Differences
Psychological stress increases as the degree of cultural difference increases between the person's own culture and the host culture. Moreover, the more negatively the individual evaluates those cultural differences, the more stressful the intercultural experience will be.

2. Ethnocentrism
Ethnocentrism is a stress factor that expresses itself in two ways. First, ethnocentric persons, particularly those in denial and defense, find intercultural experiences more threatening. Second, some cultural communities themselves are less accepting of outsiders. Students in those more ethnocentric cultures will find the experience to be more stressful.

3. Cultural Immersion
The more immersed the person is in another culture, the greater the amount of stress. "Culture fatigue" is a common problem for people who are deeply immersed in another culture – living and working with host culture persons and speaking a language other than their own.

4. Cultural Isolation
The stress of cultural immersion can be reduced by time spent with one's own culture group members. This allows for cultural reaffirmation and renewal; however, some persons can be isolated by geography and other circumstances from their own culture group. These individuals will find the experience to be more stressful.

5. Language
Persons unable to speak the language of the host culture will find the experience more stressful. Further, the more essential language ability is to functioning in the target culture, the greater the stress will be. The ability to speak the target language is not always essential, nor does it assure effective communication or intercultural adjustment (see "Beyond knowing the vocabulary," p. 97). Lack of language skills, however, can lead to social isolation and frustration.

6. Prior Intercultural Experience
Stress is affected by the amount and nature of one's prior intercultural experience. In general, people with a limited intercultural background will experience more stress in a cross-cultural situation. Those with a great deal of previous intercultural experience will generally adapt more effectively because they have already developed effective learning and coping strategies, have realistic expectations, and possess strong intercultural communication skills.

7. Expectations
There are two major issues regarding expectations in intercultural work. First, people who have positive but unrealistic expectations about the new culture will feel a psychological letdown after a time. The culture just can't live up to those expectations. Second, people who have high expectations of themselves in terms of their ability to work effectively right away in the new culture will experience stress when they encounter normal cultural adjustment problems.

8. Visibility and Invisibility
Persons who are physically different from members of the host (or dominant) culture are highly visible and may become the object of curiosity, unwanted attention, or even discrimination. This can

lead to considerable stress. Stress can also occur when an important aspect of one's identity is invisible to members of the host culture (e.g., one's religion or political philosophy) or is concealed because it is not accepted in the host culture (e.g., sexual orientation). Concealing something about oneself for fear it could harm one's standing in the community or reduce one's effectiveness can cause considerable psychological stress.

9. Power and Control

One of the most consistent research findings is that people in cultures other than their own feel a loss of power and control over events and people compared to what they possessed at home. And the more power one is used to exercising, the more disturbing the loss. Their personal efficacy is diminished and they can feel that things are "out of control." The less power and control the person has in the intercultural situation, the more psychologically stressful the experience will be.

10. Status

People who feel they are not getting the respect they deserve or, conversely, feel they are receiving unearned recognition will find the experience more psychologically intense. Qualities that are valued in the home culture may not be important in the new one and can result in a loss of status. Alternatively, being granted status on the basis of inherited characteristics (e.g., age, ethnicity, religion, nationality, family background, and occupation) rather than personal achievements can result in discomfort.

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PART VI:

Recognizing Students' Levels of Intercultural Sensitivity

We should understand why people behave as they normally do in the face of cultural difference, how they are likely to change in response to education, and what the ultimate goal is toward which our efforts are expended. In short, we should be operating with a clear model of how intercultural sensitivity is developed. ~ Milton J. Bennett (1993)

The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)

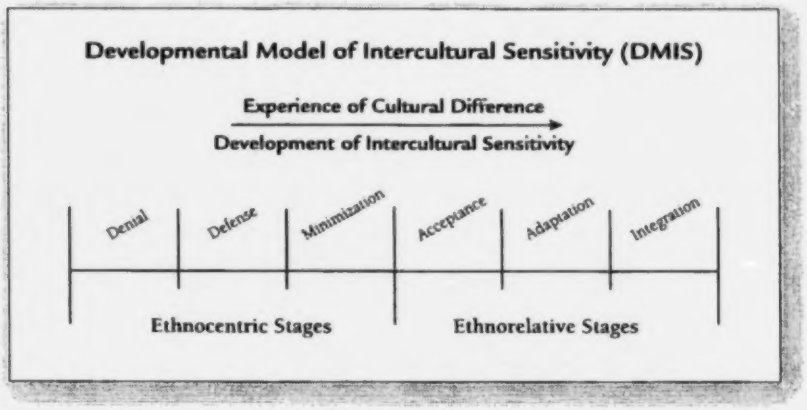
The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity will help you:

- assess and understand the general stages of intercultural sensitivity in which learners are and how they might move through these stages.
- better understand why learners respond to culture-related topics and materials as they do.
- understand the behaviors, knowledge, and attitudes learners have at different stages so that you can work more effectively with them in your programs.
- understand what learners need at each stage in order to develop intercultural competence and to better prepare them to be learners in the culture and language.

M. Bennett (1986, 1993) defines intercultural sensitivity in terms of stages of personal growth. His developmental model represents a "continuum of increasing sophistication in dealing with cultural difference," moving from ethnocentrism through stages of greater recognition and acceptance of difference, here termed "ethnorelativism." Not unlike Kim's (2001) conceptualization of intercultural communicative competence, intercultural sensitivity can be understood as a kind of cognitive complexity, where greater sensitivity is represented in the creation and increasing differentiation of cultural categories. The difference between the models is that DMIS focuses on reactions to difference, while Kim's focuses on overall communication adaptation.

This model is based on the following principles regarding intercultural competence and culture learning:

- Ethnocentrism is a natural behavior.
- The model describes a learner's subjective experience of cultural difference.
- Learners' responses to difference vary, and their responses are related to their intercultural development.
- As a developmental model, it guides how you can sequence the teaching and introduction of concepts and techniques to match the progression of development in learners.
- The use of the DMIS model, along with teaching strategies such as "content and process: support and challenge," can help learners move from one stage to another.



Using the DMIS in the study abroad environment

Balancing content and process challenges

The DMIS provides you with another tool with which to recognize a student's intercultural competence and is meant to assist you in the facilitation of learning activities. Students who exhibit characteristics of particular stages in the model will require facilitation methods that meet their needs. The following outlines in detail the characteristics of each stage, how to determine students' levels of intercultural sensitivity, and ideas for facilitating activities appropriate to those students.

Program Professionals' Note:
Information contained in this chapter about using the DMIS is concentrated on using the model for assessing students' intercultural sensitivity levels. This is a tool that can be very helpful to you. In the pre-departure strategies section of the Students' Guide, there is a simpler explanation of the model, as well as suggestions for action steps students can take to help themselves move through the model.

The Ethnocentric Stages

Ethnocentric Stage	Assessment	Facilitation
Denial Learners are unable or unwilling to recognize cultural difference; possess a neutral disinterest for cultural difference and/or unconsciously avoid people from other groups; strongly maintain traditional worldview; express benign stereotypes and/or superficial statements of tolerance.	***Learners say:*** "All I need to know when I'm in another culture is how to get around and order in a restaurant." "As long as we speak the same language, there will be no problems." "I have traveled before and found no real differences between people."	***Learners need*** the ability to gather appropriate information about culture; initiatives to explore subjective aspects of culture; and the ability to recognize difference. ***Support learners by*** providing them with objective travel tips and culture-specific information; embedding differences in non-threatening contexts; promoting an inclusive, non-blaming climate; and illustrating ideas with user-friendly activities. ***Challenge learners by*** giving them some subjective culture material and a constructive vision of intercultural interaction; arousing curiosity; and facilitating structured contact with other cultures.

Ethnocentric Stage	Assessment	Facilitation
Defense Learners negatively evaluate cultural difference (the greater the difference, the more negative the evaluation); polarize differences into "us" and "them," accompanied by overt negative stereotyping; manifest an attitude of superiority toward "underdeveloped" cultures.	***Learners say:*** "When you go to other countries, it makes you realize how much better the U.S. is." "People from other cultures are not as open-minded as people from my own culture." "I signed up for this program because people there need so much help."	***Learners need*** the ability to manage anxiety; the ability to recognize similarities; and the development of tolerance and patience. ***Support learners by*** demonstrating the universality of ethnocentrism (in-group and out-group); avoiding cultural contrasts and providing reassurance and support for pride within one's group as well as focusing curiosity on the in-group; and providing opportunities for positive, non-threatening interactions with members of other groups. ***Challenge learners by*** providing historical contexts for in-groups and out-groups; demonstrating commonality; stressing team-building and cooperative activities; and helping learners identify transferable skills used to deal with difference.
Minimization Learners recognize and accept superficial cultural differences while holding that all human beings are essentially the same; emphasize the similarities of people and commonality of basic values; define universal standards in ethnocentric terms (as related to oneself).	***Learners say:*** "I am sick and tired of hearing all the time about what makes people different; we need to recognize that we are all human beings, after all." "The best way to get along is to just be yourself." "Deep down we are really all the same – people just trying to lead healthy and happy lives."	***Learners need*** cultural general knowledge; knowledge of one's own culture(s); open-mindedness; listening skills; and the ability to perceive others accurately. ***Support learners by*** providing some subjective cultural differences and definitions of culture; differentiating between stereotypes and generalizations; avoiding excess stress on cultural contrasts; and expanding curiosity from in-group to out-group. ***Challenge learners by*** providing categories and frameworks for understanding one's own culture; facilitating contact with ethnorelative cultural informants in structured activities; providing opportunities for difference-seeking and focusing on cultural self-awareness.

The Ethnorelative Stages

Ethnorelative Stage	Assessment	Facilitation
Acceptance Learners recognize and appreciate cultural differences in behavior and values; accept cultural differences as viable alternative solutions to the organization of human existence; begin to interpret phenomena within a context; consciously elaborate categories of difference.	***Learners say:*** "It would be boring to be around the same kind of people all of the time." "I generally enjoy the differences that exist between myself and people from other countries." "I am just starting to learn more about this new culture and it's amazing how many similarities and differences there really are."	***Learners need*** culture-specific knowledge; cognitive flexibility; tolerance of ambiguity; contextual knowledge; and respect for others' values and beliefs. ***Support learners by*** providing more complex subjective cultural differences including value analysis; elaborating on categories of cultural contrast; demonstrating relationships between cognitive, cultural, and communication styles; making cultural differences the focus while deepening cultural self-awareness and preparing learners for cultural frame-of-reference shifting. ***Challenge learners by*** distinguishing cultural, moral, and ethical relativity; discussing perceived contradictions between culture-specific and universal categories; building on enthusiasm for difference seeking to promote more profound contrasts; and providing experiential learning opportunities that require intercultural empathy.
Adaptation Learners develop skills that enable intercultural communication; use empathy and shift cultural frame of reference to understand and be understood across cultural boundaries.	***Learners say:*** "I can maintain my values and behave in culturally appropriate ways." "The more I understand this culture, the better I get at the language." "I really enjoy some of the French characteristics I have learned. Some behaviors, though, are ones I can never imagine feeling comfortable with."	***Learners need*** risk-taking skills; problem-solving skills; continued expansion of cultural behaviors and social adaptability in order to link their cognitive ability to other aspects of their behavior. ***Support learners by*** providing models of cultural adaptation; discussing cultural topics that require intercultural empathy (e.g., appreciation of humor); facilitating opportunities for learners to practice behavior in known cultures; using ethnorelative cultural informants in less structured activities; and preparing learners to learn autonomously. ***Challenge learners by*** providing cultural identity development ideas and opportunities to interact in unexplored cultural contexts, and by addressing deeper anxiety issues, such as identity conflicts.

Ethnorelative Stage	Assessment	Facilitation
Integration Learners internalize bicultural or multicultural frames of reference, maintain a definition of identity that is "marginal" to any particular culture and sees one's self as "in process."	***Learners say:*** "Whatever the situation, I can usually look at it from a variety of cultural points of view." "Everywhere is home, if you know enough about how things work here." "I may not like everything here, but I am willing to try to understand why it is the way it is – and just to accept the things I cannot understand."	***Learners need*** a culturally sensitive sense of humor, the ability to create new categories, and role and identity flexibility. ***Support learners by*** providing theoretical frameworks for constructing a multicultural identity; creating opportunities for marginal peer group interaction and opportunities for cultural marginals to serve as resource persons. ***Challenge learners by*** providing cultural mediation models and models of ethical development; promoting the self as process, and encouraging commitments and boundary setting.

Adapted from materials by M. J. Bennett (1986, 1993)

Reflection

Reflect on your first intercultural encounter. What was the situation? How did you respond? Using the DMIS model, how would you characterize your behavioral, emotional, and cognitive response?

Now think about a more recent intercultural encounter. Using the DMIS, how would you characterize your cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses to difference in that situation?

What process have you gone through in your intercultural development that brings you to where you are now?

Adapted from materials developed by M. J. Bennett & J. M. Bennett (1993).

MAXIMIZING STUDY ABROAD

Program Professionals' Guide

Section IV:
Culture-Learning Strategies

Facilitating Students' Intercultural Learning

This section focuses on basic strategies for how students learn about culture throughout their study abroad experience. You will find this chapter to be of particular help to you in doing the following:

- debriefing intercultural learning,
- defining the role of an intercultural facilitator, and
- facilitating activities from the Students' Guide.

Debriefing intercultural learning

The degree to which you may be involved in the international education of your students will vary. The Students' Guide contains numerous activities that provide curricular content that you can use with your students. Before you engage in this type of instruction with students, you will need some information on how to debrief the sessions you facilitate.

Debriefing is what occurs upon completion of an activity. It often involves a discussion among all participants in the session about what transpired, what was learned, and what was understood or not understood. Since debriefing constitutes a synthesis or overview of the entire session it is very important that there is enough time left over after every session for debriefing. The facilitator leads the debriefing but will often speak very little to leave discussion open for the participants to share impressions, thoughts, and feelings about the activity. The facilitator will usually want to write down participants' comments so they can be viewed by all participants, and will want to do a wrap-up that comprehensively summarizes the session.

The Students' Guide lists some suggestions for how culture is discussed in debriefing sessions (see Section I, Part IV). The Description-Interpretation-Evaluation (D-I-E) method is suggested as a way to discuss culture objectively. It is highly recommended that you acquaint yourself with this process before beginning to facilitate exercises in the Students' Guide.

Program professional vs. intercultural facilitator

Much of the material in this guide will assist you in becoming more effective in working with your students, but another less obvious objective is to help you develop your skills as a facilitator of intercultural learning. You will find that there is much in common with these two roles, but they are also somewhat distinct. While a program professional may tend to be more directive with students, an intercultural facilitator, on the other hand, allows students much autonomy in their learning and development. Moreover, since students' levels of intercultural learning will vary substantially, what may help one student in coming to terms with a cultural issue may not be effective for another. Therefore, a more student-centered and less directive approach can generally be recommended for those facilitating intercultural learning.

Professionals should keep in mind the following advice when embarking on intercultural training with students:

1. To be truly effective you should ideally be a participant first before facilitating the intercultural learning activities you intend to use with students.

2. Talk to others who have facilitated the intercultural activity you wish to use. What issues came up? What was the response from students? Did the activity achieve the desired goals?

3. Find opportunities to expand and improve upon your facilitation skills: read up on what has recently been written about the field in journals and books (Intercultural Press is an excellent intercultural training resource), enroll in university courses, or attend training sessions held by professional organizations that specialize in intercultural learning. (See resources section at the end of this guide.)

4. Make use of the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) to discover where your students are in terms of their intercultural sensitivity.

5. Get to know the learning styles of students you advise, and try to expand their conception of learning to the study abroad environment.

6. Always remember the necessity of balancing challenging students with supporting their intercultural growth and development. When you see their eyes glaze over, you know there is a need to increase the challenge of the content or process.

7. Always leave adequate time for extensive debriefing or discussion with students. It is in debriefing, not in filling out answers to exercises, where the most significant learning occurs.

8. In addition to the guide, you can act as a valuable resource for your students by giving examples of intercultural encounters from your own experience of living abroad and studying a foreign language.

Credo for intercultural communication trainers

As intercultural trainers, we believe we must recognize, understand, and accept that:

- intercultural training involves learning on cognitive, affective, and behavioral levels.
- intercultural training involves working with people who are individually at different learning points in their understanding and application of cultural differences.
- intercultural training is sometimes uncomfortable and anxiety-producing.
- intercultural training often challenges participants' belief systems and value structures.
- because of the nature of intercultural training, the trainer should anticipate and prepare for resistance from the participants.
- the individual experiences of the participants should be acknowledged and validated.
- in intercultural training, the learning points are the learners' points.
- we will not always see immediate results from our training.
- effective debriefing is essential to the development of intercultural communication competence.
- effective debriefing is an artistic creation involving a balance of participant input and facilitator insights.
- intercultural training involves ethical challenges particular to the study of culture.
- we are also bound by our individual cultural and developmental filters.

Ibrahim DeVries & Kappler (2000)

Activities and Strategies from the Students' Guide

In this section, specific information is presented to help you facilitate the culture-learning activities and strategies in the Students' Guide. These activities and strategies are available in Section VII for you to use as handouts with your students.

Note: Page numbers are listed for the Students' Guide (*Students'*) and the Program Professionals' Guide (*Professionals'*), where appropriate.

Pre-Departure Strategies

You as a culturally diverse person

Discovering your cultural diversity *(p. 39 Students', p. D-1 Professionals')*

Objective(s): This serves as an introductory exercise that allows students to recognize that they are members of groups that influence their own cultural identity. This activity is useful on its own and because it sets the stage for when students are asked to identify their own value orientations (p. 69) and for when they are asked in post-study-abroad sections to consider identity changes they have encountered as a result of study abroad.

Facilitation: Students in focus groups have greatly enjoyed filling in the circles, sharing their responses with others, and discussing similarities and differences they have noted. A common format is to give students a few minutes to complete the circles on their own. When giving directions, we encourage you to provide very limited information so as not to sway students to fill out the circles in any specific way. For example, when introducing the activity, do not encourage students to consider nationality, as this will become a key debriefing point. If you do plan to ask students to share information with any other student, make sure you tell them that what they write down will be shared. This prevents putting students at risk to unknowingly share information they prefer to keep private – perhaps a hidden disability, their age, their sexual orientation, or a political affiliation. Once students have completed the circles, ask them to pair up and discuss their circles with another student. Then, have them turn the page and ask them to complete at least the first two reflection questions. As a large group, you can collect their reactions.

In the debriefing of the large group discussion, discuss the third reflection question (about values connected to the circles), the fourth (about how the circles may change abroad) and fifth (about role similarity and differences). Here are a few key points we have used in discussing these particular reflection questions with students.

Question Three:
"Go back to the diagram and add some of the values you attribute to the circle...."

Comments along the following lines can be very helpful:

- Some of our circles may give us very clear values. For example, your religion and spiritual beliefs may give you direct guidance on valuing harmony amongst people and respect for life and to take time for others.
- Some of our circles may seem to conflict. For example, your parents may have taught you to respect elders and authority, but your role as a student has taught you to value equality and to question authority. Also, your role as a student may have taught you the importance of managing time and this may conflict with your spiritual belief of taking time to help others. How do you cope with these conflicts?

Question Four:
"How might these circles change when you are abroad?..."

Comments along the following lines can be very helpful:

- Share your own experience with confronting your nationality. For example, "My own experience was that when I was preparing to go abroad I thought I had a very good sense of myself. However, I was not prepared – even though I was told to be! – for so many questions about my country. I was also not prepared to be viewed as a U.S. American. I was just me. I realize now that much of who I am IS shaped by national culture. No, not all of me and maybe not always on a daily basis do I feel my national culture. But it is there."
- Sometimes students are quick to abandon the influence the U.S. culture has on them. It's in vogue to cut down the U.S. That's fine. However, it's important to recognize that all cultures have advantages and disadvantages. Study abroad often gives you an opportunity to explore these advantages and disadvantages.

Question Five:
"How might the roles you play be similar and different in your host country?"

Comments along the following lines can be very helpful:

- What does it mean to be a student in the U.S.? While you may feel very average, it is not average to go to college. Just one in five U.S. Americans take college courses, just over one in six earns a bachelor's degree, and one of 11 earns a graduate or professional degree. (*Report: Greater percentage of Americans educated* by Tamara Henry, USA Today online, 6/5/2002).
- Beyond this consideration, is being a student considered positive or the right thing to do in your identity circles? How might being a student be viewed in your host culture – as something just a few elite do (maybe just one in 20 attend) or something nearly everyone does? How might this difference impact how your hosts view you?
- How might relationships with faculty, staff, friends, or host families differ from what you are accustomed to?

Caution: If you are going to ask students to share the information with others, be sure to tell them before they write in their circles.

Becoming familiar with culture: the iceberg analogy *(p. 42 Students', p. E-1 Professionals')*

Joshua and the iceberg *(p. 43 Students')*

Objective(s): To have students practice making connections between specific events and deeper cultural aspects. The goal is not necessarily that students learn specific values of the host cultures, but rather to encourage students to develop multiple interpretations for events.

Facilitation: The Students' Guide provides a fairly thorough discussion of the steps to take with this activity and also points out key debriefing issues. After students complete this iceberg activity, provide them with additional incidents from their specific host countries. Be prepared to give multiple explanations for the observables in the incident – as the goal is not simply to be right in one's analysis of culture, but rather to engage in the game of developing multiple interpretations.

The iceberg model: identifying aspects of culture *(p. 46 Students')*

Objective(s): To have students think beyond superficial or simply visible manifestations of culture.

Facilitation: Use this model as an icebreaker for students to form small groups and create lists of so-called deep and surface aspects of culture.

Surface – those artifacts, objects, and behaviors, or the more visible aspects of culture.
Deep – less visible manifestation of culture: values, beliefs systems, societal rules.

The reflection questions provided on p. 47 of the Students' Guide provide you with specific prompter questions to help the students gain a great deal from this quick activity. Additional points to stress with students include:

- Not all aspects of visible culture may have a connection to deeper cultural aspects.
- What is important in one culture may not appear to be important in another because the visible cues are different. However, the value could actually be similar.
- We tend to look for parallels in cultures and easy ways to make comparisons. While these comparisons can be helpful, they can also mislead us into thinking we understand the second culture when in fact, all we have done is to make an observation about what is not present because it does not look the same as in our own culture.

Differentiating cultural from personal and universal *(p. 48 Students')*

Differentiate cultural from personal and universal *(p. 49 Students')*

Objective(s): To recognize that not all explanations of human behavior are cultural, and that part of culture learning is differentiating between cultural, universal, and personal dimensions.

Facilitation: It is common for U.S. students to dismiss that they are influenced by culture and that others, too, may be influenced by culture. This exercise highlights that universal, personal, and cultural factors form a web – not a cause-and-effect linear equation. In doing this activity, it is likely that some discussions may involve student disagreement over what category certain behaviors can be placed. If 51 percent of a group engages in a certain behavior can it be considered a cultural trait of the entire group? It is important to have students think in general terms of the predominant behaviors characterizing certain groups, and that cultural groups may have a tendency to behave in a certain way. Certainly personal and individual differences will exist in any culture, and discussions should acknowledge this important point. Further, if we dismiss the role of culture and assume everything is personal, we may fail to recognize real patterns that exist and may fail to acknowledge the power of ritual and the influence of others in our lives.

Some strategies for culture-specific learning *(p. 51 Students')*

Basic things you should know before you go *(p. 53 Students', p. F Professionals')*

Objective(s): To provide students with a variety of means for learning about culture through different media; help students deepen their interest in the aesthetics of their country of destination with the rationale that such appreciation will ease their cross-cultural adjustment.

Facilitation: Have students share what they already know about the host country/culture. This is a good opportunity for the facilitator to get to know each student, their cultural knowledge level, preferred learning styles and in general how they feel about and manage cultural differences.

How you facilitate your sessions will depend on whether students are traveling to the same country/region or if diverse countries and represented. However, you may select certain topics, (e.g., politics, local economy, current events) and have students investigate and then report on what they find to the other students.

This activity could be conducted in a variety of formats: quiz with prizes (perhaps even candy from the host country or maps of the destination cities), game show such as Jeopardy format, or even extra credit or program fee discount for researching and presenting information to the group. Make sure to stress to students that knowing this basic information will help them ease their anxiety about getting into conversations with host nationals.

When in Rome, do as the Romans do...but what's a Roman? *(p. 53 Students')*

Differentiating stereotypes and generalizations *(p. 54 Students', p. G-1 Professionals')*

Objective(s): To encourage students to differentiate between stereotypes and generalizations so that they can make more well-informed, balanced, and sophisticated statements in regards to people who are culturally different from themselves.

Facilitation: This activity can be a good way to introduce the critical topic of stereotyping. Make sure that you have enough time to fully discuss this topic and be prepared for some resistance. The resistance can take two very different forms and is often present in the same group. 1) Many students may not have had many opportunities to realize that they hold stereotypes toward certain groups. Students should understand that holding stereotypes of certain groups is a natural tendency, as are ethnocentric attitudes. 2) Students may be hesitant to make generalized statements about another culture, feeling that any general statement is a stereotype. For the latter, be prepared with specific examples (such as the conclusion of the section on p. 55 of the Students' Guide) and explain how using generalizations is how culture learning occurs. There would be little learning happening if we were afraid to make statements based upon what we knew or thought we knew. Try to help them see how you use generalizations to make tentative predictions about how to behave in new situations in the host culture. Collect a brainstorm list of what stereotypes students hold of the host country. If at all possible, try to get students to empathize with, or "put themselves into the shoes," of members of groups that are stereotyped. The time spent on this activity is time that will greatly help students move forward in their own culture learning.

Predominant U.S. cultural patterns *(p. 60 Students', p. H-1 Professionals')*

Interpreting culture through popular sayings *(p. 60 Students')*

Objective(s): To have students learn to recognize cultural values and beliefs that are inherent in well-known sayings and phrases; also demonstrates how we can learn about culture through the language we use.

Facilitation: Have students share explanations of their written cultural implications with the class. Do the students know popular sayings from their language and culture of study that they could use to contrast with the U.S. American sayings? Note that in facilitating this activity with students, it may be difficult for them to generate the values connected with the statements. If they don't like the sayings here, have them generate their own list. Also, have them identify sayings within the U.S. culture that may be contradictory (for example, "Silence is golden" and "The squeaky wheel gets the grease").

International perspectives on U.S. Americans *(p. 62 Students', p. I-1 Professionals')*

Objective(s): To hear directly from "outsiders" to give a chance to learn more about ourselves. The mirror reflects what we think we see, while the perspectives of others give us more to consider.

Facilitation: These statements were provided by students who had been in the U.S. for varying lengths of time – from just a few months to several years. They represent a wonderful scope of reactions, from friendship to ideals to how loud Americans talk. The reflection and discussion questions on p. 64 of the Students' Guide provide straightforward issues to discuss with your students. Be prepared to share what host nationals have said about U.S. Americans while the U.S. Americans are abroad and what host nationals have said about U.S. Americans when they themselves have been in the States.

Comparing cultural attitudes and viewpoints *(p. 64 Students')*

Contrasting U.S. American views with the host country *(p. 65 Students')*

Objective(s): To give students an opportunity to delve more deeply into comparisons between their host culture and the U.S.

Facilitation: Most students will undoubtedly have thought quite a bit about some ways in which their own culture differs from the hosts. However, they probably have not had an opportunity to fully consider how deeply some of these contrast may run. The biggest challenges with this activity are:

1. *Resistance to categorizing the U.S. culture at all.*
Try to help students see that there can be some advantages to considering the role of a mainstream culture -- whether or not the students see themselves as members of this mainstream. Discuss ways in which you personally see generalizations about the U.S. as helpful and how others might be viewing them as U.S. Americans while overseas.

2. *Lack of knowledge of the host culture.*
If students have extremely limited information to the host culture, one solution is to select a guest speaker to work with the students and describe some of the contrasts he or she has experienced. Or, conduct an interview yourself and share with students the interviewee's responses.

3. *Impossibility of describing one host culture.*
Clearly, there are many cultures within each nation-state. Is there a mainstream culture in the host country that influences particular aspects of daily life? Is there a mainstream culture to the region that students attend? If the answer is no, help students to understand the history of the complexities of cultures involved and how this might impact their stay.

The reflection questions provided to the students offer clear guidance on how to begin debriefing this activity. Make sure that students feel challenged (are they really ignoring the influence culture may have on them if they resist the idea of belonging to the U.S. culture)

and supported (perhaps their experiences are unique in how they have developed their own values and thus, their resistance should be supported in that they have unique experiences. However, do help them understand they may be evaluated in the host country based on a perception that they are mainstream U.S. Americans.)

Understanding yourself as a member of a culture or cultures *(p. 69 Students')*

The values chart – how I rate myself *(p. 69 Students', p. J-1 Professionals')*
How will my host country rate on the values chart? *(p. 71 Students')*

Objective(s): To increase students' awareness of their particular values and belief systems and to get the point across that even within the same culture, such values and beliefs can differ greatly.

Facilitation: Ideally, an entire session should be devoted to exploring the concept of values covered in this section, as it goes into much greater specificity than previous material. A good ice-breaker to use for this session would be a "Walking Values Exercise." This activity can be used for sessions composed of at least five students. All that is needed is a room large enough to move around in, and four or five signs written with the statements strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree. You may or may not want to have an option for "undecided." A number system from –3 to +3 can also be used to represent agreement/disagreement. The facilitator will read off statements based on the values in "How I Rate Myself," and the students will then proceed to the area of the room that corresponds to how they feel about the statement. For example, after the facilitator reads, "You are ultimately responsible for your own decisions," each participant walks to a certain location. Go around the room and have willing participants in each area explain why they are standing where they are.

In-Country Strategies

The strategies presented here as "in-country" strategies were selected for their particular relevance while the student is actually in the host country environment. However, the material in these sections can very well be covered in a pre-departure program facilitated by the program coordinator.

Strategies for social relations – interacting with hosts *(p. 75 Students')*

Ideas for interaction *(p. 75 Students')*

Objective(s): To assist students in maximizing their learning in the host country by immersing themselves in the culture and by seeking out opportunities to interact with host nationals.

Facilitation: You can play a key role in emphasizing the benefits and rewards of interacting with hosts versus constant association with same-country internationals. Students who do plan ahead and know what opportunities for interaction are available in the host country can make those associations soon after they arrive. Students who provided feedback on the Students' Guide continually emphasized how it was up to them to take the initiative to

make the connection with host nationals. In addition to outlining the benefits and the fact that much is up to the visiting student, you can help students by:

- brainstorming with students specific ways they can get involved at the host institution and in the community.
- making specific suggestions based on the students' interests.
- considering if home stays are not an option, can host visits be arranged?
- providing a list to students of community organizations that enjoy having internationals come and give a talk.

Making the most of homestays and host families *(p. 77 Students')*

Homestay Expectations *(p. 77 Students', p. K Professionals')*

Objective(s): To learn the potential value of homestays along with the possible drawbacks and responsibilities involved. To assist students in thinking realistically about their expectations for interacting with host families.

Facilitation: Ultimately whether to have a homestay or host family will in most cases be up to the student, although for some programs, living with a local family is the only option. Try discussing the issues with students after they have read this section in the Students' Guide.

The pros and cons of homestays

Much can be said about the positive benefits of homestays in terms of the opportunities for students to learn about culture and language in a first-hand, experiential manner. While the opportunity for homestays varies by program, we included this information to have the student think about what their expectations are in regards to this cross-cultural learning experience. It would be worthwhile for the institution offering homestays or host families to think about their own expectations for both the students and the families, and convey them to both these groups so that the potential for misunderstanding is reduced. The following are lists of expectations that may be contemplated by international programs offices that operate homestay/host family programs.

Expectations for the student

- Student will behave in a responsible manner and be mindful that many things will be done differently in the homestay household.
- Student is motivated and will take good advantage of time spent with the family to practice the host country language.
- Student will become a member of the family and as such may be expected to do some housework/chores.

Expectations for the host family

- Family will be motivated to host a student by their own interest in furthering international understanding and cooperation.
- Family will accept student as a member of their family over the duration of the homestay.
- Family members will understand that the student's learning about the

country and culture is the primary objective of the homestay and will assist in this endeavor.

Strategies for interacting with your hosts *(p. 79 Students')*

Objective(s): Maximize the comfort level and learning experience for a student's visit or stay with a host family. Have the student carefully consider what behaviors are appropriate when visiting the home of a host national.

Facilitation: If you are familiar enough with the host culture, you will be able to use your skills to help the student with these strategies. Otherwise, seek out either a native of the culture or another knowledgeable cultural informant. Depending on the circumstances, students may or may not have yet had much contact with host families. Even for students currently in host families, they may have not thought about how their behavior is affecting their hosts.

This activity offers a good opportunity for discussion. First explore in small groups or individually how students would answer the questions in the six etiquette sections based upon what they know, have heard, or experienced. If some students' behaviors show signs of creating difficulties and miscommunication with their hosts, this is an opportune time for you to tactfully identify the behavior and explain how to go about correcting it.

Understanding culture shock and the stages of adjustment *(p. 84 Students')*

One of the most important roles you may play in your professional career is to help students through the shock of being in a substantially unfamiliar environment apart from their usual support network. There are many factors that can contribute to student difficulty in adjusting to their new environment. Most scholars in the field tend to view culture shock, culture fatigue, or language shock as natural responses to different surroundings. All students should be expected to go through a certain degree of cultural adjustment. In fact, if students are not experiencing any cultural discomfort at all, they are either unusually adept at adjusting or are probably not making much of an effort to integrate into the host culture.

Many study abroad programs have in-country orientation programs with a component on cross-cultural adjustment. This is a golden opportunity for staff to discuss culture shock and adjustment issues as students begin their time abroad. Letting students know about cross-cultural adjustment will help them prepare themselves for what they can expect. At the very least, discussing the stages of culture shock, including the "U Curve," with students will help them understand that the disorientation they may be feeling is natural and will usually subside as the student becomes more adjusted to the host country.

It is critical to help students understand that some culture shock is expected during adjustment and is a healthy sign of their interaction with the host environment. In short, despite its bad name, culture shock is not something to be avoided. It is also critical to help students understand that some reactions are unhealthy and that there are times when they should seek assistance.

Below is a partial list of some symptoms that a student is experiencing too much shock.

- Substantial weight gain
- Substantial weight loss
- Complete loss of appetite
- Insomnia beyond jet lag
- Sleeping or wanting to sleep far more than usual (beyond initial jet lag)
- Feeling depressed for two or more weeks
- Lack of desire for basic hygiene

Culture shock and cultural adjustment are often used as synonyms and we do sometimes use them interchangeably in the Students' Guide. However, it is important to consider that adjustment refers to ongoing life-long process, while culture shock can refer to specific incidents along the way in one's adjustment. For example, one author's spouse is a non-native and has been in the U.S. for more than ten years. There is relatively little that shocks him at this point because so many immersion experiences have come his way and his coping mechanisms are well established. This is not to say that he is completely adjusted to the U.S. American life. On the contrary, he continues to constantly form a deeper understanding of life here and continues to shape his own identity as a non-native as time goes on.

Giving the student information about both culture-general and culture-specific adjustment in the host country can be very helpful. In certain countries, for example, women and minorities may face challenges that work against their adjustment. Identifying what these are helps students know what they can expect. Encouraging the student to talk with others who have gone before (returnee students from the host country) is a great way of learning from others' experiences. Program coordinators might want to organize a social gathering for both departees and returnees so that information could be exchanged on an informal level. In most cases, you will find returnees are delighted to have the chance to reflect upon their study abroad experience and to help out students who are, in a sense, following in their footsteps. Be prepared to spend time with the returnees, making sure that their messages are appropriate for your program. Having a guest speaker who says, "I didn't have any difficulty I just fit right in," is typically not very helpful because it gives false hopes to new students and because you don't know if the guest speaker is accurate in assessing the situation. In short, make sure that the returnee can speak thoughtfully about the adjustment process. Provide the returnee with suggested topics that may help in this process:

- Describe how you felt when you first arrived in the country.
- What did you do to make sure you had opportunities to meet host nationals?
- Describe some high and low points in your own adjustment.
- What strategies did you use to help you through the low points?

If returnees are not available, you can provide examples from past students and/or speak from your own experiences.

Statements of adjustment *(p. 87 Students', p. L-1 Professionals')*

Objective(s): To have students think about cross-cultural adjustment as a process, and what their own adjustment might be like in the foreign country. Helps students to develop more realistic expectations for their sojourn.

Facilitation: To complete this exercise, students will need to be familiar with the stages. You may want to give additional examples of the stages from your own experiences abroad. Understand and convey to students that the stages are fluid and a person may not fit precisely into one stage or another. Note that Kurt's comment, "I love it here. I can't imagine being anywhere else" is placed in both stages 1 and 4. The "true" placement of this statement can only be made by having more information. Is Kurt fully integrated into the culture and he really understands what he is experiencing? Or, is he just responding based on euphoria from surface aspects of the culture, like great weather, or even new freedoms he is experiencing?

While the activity, at first glance, may appear to be too straight-forward or simple to provide much depth of discussion, we have found in piloting the activity that students have greatly enjoyed the opportunity to play with the characters and imagine why they may have made these comments. More importantly, they are able to connect the experience to themselves by answering the reflection questions provided with the activity and such additional questions such as:

- For those of you who have traveled abroad before, have you ever made any of these comments? Say more about what you were feeling and thinking at the time of the comment.
- What would you do if a fellow traveler was having a particularly difficult time and was always seeming to make stage 2 comments?

Personal highs and lows of study abroad *(p. 89 Students')*

Objective(s): To help students understand that their own adjustment curve will vary from the U-curve, to help predict what might be some low and high points.

Facilitation: This is an excellent opportunity to connect your specific program with the students' personal calendars. What holidays will they have an opportunity to celebrate in the host culture? Which holidays from their own culture may they miss out on? You can help prepare them for the lows and more important, introduce enthusiasm about new cultural experiences they may not even have known would take place during their time abroad.

My personal coping strategies *(p. 91 Students')*

Objective(s): To encourage students to consider very specific strategies they will use for coping with difficulties encountered in the host culture.

Facilitation: It's important that students recognize they have well-developed coping strategies for stressful events already. Of course, some of these strategies may be healthier

and more culturally appropriate than others. One former study abroad student often speaks of her love of running and how she continued to go for daily runs in Kenya, even though she knew it was not really appropriate to do so. She knew the cultural risk she was taking, but understood that for her own sanity, she needed to continue this coping strategy. While it may not be a perfect strategy for the culture, it is a preferred strategy to others such as going out and drinking if you are a single female. While this activity is highly personal, you may want to ask students to share their strategies and to discuss the appropriateness of the coping mechanism for the host culture.

Going beyond surface adjustment *(p. 92 Students')*

Coping scenarios *(p. 93 Students', p. M-1 Professionals')*

Objective(s): To aid students in managing their emotional states while they are abroad by highlighting various methods of stress reduction.

Facilitation: Often people may be tempted to ignore their feelings simply because they may have not experienced them before in a certain situation and are surprised that they are feeling them at that time. Others around them may not appear to feel the same way, so the person thinks that they must be doing something "wrong" to feel that way. This exercise recognizes that these feelings are common to everyone at certain times, particularly to those in an environment that is foreign to them.

The coping scenarios listed here provide a good start in encouraging students to begin discussing what advice they would offer the characters and then, what they themselves typically do in stressful situations. Have them share some of their personal coping strategies with others in the group. This is a good opportunity to learn from each other and expand upon their repertoire of coping strategies developed in the previous exercise.

Phases of cultural awareness *(p. 96 Students')*

Differentiating the phases of cultural awareness *(p. 97 Students', p. N-1 Professionals')*

Objective(s): This activity provides a way for students to think about and assess intercultural competence in the context of being a visitor in a foreign country.

Facilitation: Although the phases of cultural adjustment appear parallel to the stages of adjustment, there is not an exact match. This activity offers a good opportunity for you to expand upon the idea of competence and to relate it directly to the host country environment by giving examples of each phase of cultural awareness. Program professionals may stress the importance of the three areas of skills that are important for the student to master: cognitions, behaviors, and feelings or attitudes. Recall in the early discussion of intercultural competence (Section II, Part 3 of this Guide) that even a well-informed sojourner will encounter unfamiliar cultural phenomenon. Also, a knowledgeable person who is unable to express appropriate behavioral or emotional responses is not truly competent.

Strategies for developing intercultural competence *(p. 101 Students')*

A model of intercultural sensitivity *(pp. 101-104 Students')*

Objective(s): To have students think of intercultural sensitivity as something that can be learned, especially in study abroad; to familiarize them with the model of intercultural sensitivity and have them reflect on their own level of sensitivity.

Facilitation: The exercise can help begin a dialogue with students about intercultural sensitivity. Refer to Section III, p. 59 of this guide for more detail about the DMIS, including how to diagnose students' intercultural sensitivity levels.

Francine Kline, a French language teacher and facilitator of study abroad orientations, used the DMIS statements with her students in the following manner: She cut up the statements and gave them to students. The statements were cut up so that no order was imposed on how they were presented so students could easily shuffle through the statements and were more apt to compare and contrast statements rather than try to determine a linear order. Students then read each statement and determined: "This describes me exactly;" "This describes me somewhat;" and "This does not describe me at all." This allowed Francine to engage the students in the model, rather than simply describing the model to them in a lecture format. The students were given ample time in the orientation to express their opinion about why the statement may fit them.

Also, there is a new inventory available, based on the DMIS, called the "Intercultural Development Inventory." Practitioners must be certified to administer this inventory. For additional information, contact the Intercultural Communication Institute.

Caution: It's important to help students focus on their own development and not use the information to judge their fellow classmates. One way to demonstrate this is to make a comment that may seem to be quite defensive. For example, you might say something like, "I have been amazed over the years to realize that there are some aspects of U.S. culture that I find _____(you could fill in the blank with whatever strength of negative word with which you feel comfortable, such as repulsive, offensive, rude, strange, unusual.) Ask students to react to the statement and categorize it in the model. Then, provide an explanation of a specific behavior you have experienced over and over again that you find to be rude or repulsive. Then, go on to explain your interpretation of the behavior based on your personal and cultural background. Then, explain or propose what you think U.S. Americans might think of the behavior. In this manner, you are demonstrating that real likes and dislikes can occur and can reflect a deep understanding of another and one's own culture. If someone were to judge you only by the initial statement, they would not have understood your ability to consider the behavior from multiple viewpoints. Conclude with cautioning students from making a mistake of categorizing others based on limited information.

Important Instructions:
Please note that for simplification purposes the DMIS discussed in the Students' Guide combines the adaptation and integration stages into a single stage. This method seems to work well for some learners and facilitators.

Just as it is important to recognize each student's level of intercultural sensitivity, *care should be given so that the model is not used to label students*, particularly if they happen to be in stages of denial or defense. For many students, thinking in terms of intercultural sensitivity can be a very new developmental experience. If students are given appropriate instruction and support they will be more likely to engage in the self-reflection necessary for this learning to take place. The challenge and support model presented earlier is key to assisting students in this process. You should make efforts to create exercises that engage students so they challenge themselves with new activities or information that will help them develop skills. Providing ample opportunity for students to debrief their experiences is one way to accomplish this goal.

Enhancing your culture learning *(p. 108 Students')*

Debriefing in action *(p. 108 Students')*

Objective(s): Students will have ideally already covered stereotypes and generalizations in chapter 2 in the Pre-Departure Strategies section of the Students' Guide. This section builds upon those skills to include participant observation and debriefing skills. Staff can help students grow in their sophistication of how they view the host country and culture. Remember, it should not be the goal of the program professional to invest time in convincing the student of the merits of the country, but for students to be able to compare and discuss issues in an empathic and nonjudgmental manner. This process takes time, of course, but if done properly will result in greater mutual understanding between students and host nationals.

Facilitation: The program coordinator should be well-acquainted with the contents of this section, in particular debriefing and the use of the description-interpretation-evaluation (D-I-E) method. Debriefing skills are not learned overnight but come with experience in facilitating learning sessions. D-I-E is one way to help students to think more deeply about cultural encounters and events they experience abroad. Jumping to cultural conclusions often results in interpretations that lack detail and evaluations that are erroneous. People tend to simplify cultural phenomenon and rely on their own cultural visor to view another culture. One of the strategies that program coordinators can use to get students to refrain from this tendency is to encourage them to make descriptive questions and statements first.

You will need to tailor the content of this chapter to your own needs. You may want to use a session to explain participant observation and debriefing techniques to students, then brainstorm with students over possible topics for field research (family life, the concept of equality in society, student behavior in class, etc.) Then have students give brief talks or presentations on their findings. Use D-I-E to debrief these sessions.

Revisiting the iceberg *(p. 113 Students')*

Objective(s): To take advantage of the time in-country to process some of the critical incidents that students are experiencing.

Facilitation: Students may still need some help separating out the surface and deep aspects of culture and may certainly need assistance in connecting the two. Conducting a

discussion in an open format in which you provide examples to students based on your experience can be an excellent way to begin the conversation and to invite discussion. Select an incident with which they might have some familiarity so they have confidence in understanding the culture and select an incident that challenges them to put their detective skills to work.

Strategies for keeping a journal *(p. 115 Students')*

The importance of journaling *(p. 115 Students')*

Program professionals who have studied abroad don't need to be reminded of the value of keeping a journal. As much as possible, students should be encouraged to keep journals during their time abroad.

Objective(s): A journal serves as a unique tool for learning in a study abroad context. Aside from keeping a record of one's own progress abroad, it provides a reference for culture and language learning and is a method of coping with the feelings and emotions experienced during cultural adjustment. A journal may have real therapeutic benefits for students as they navigate through the new culture. Perhaps most importantly, a journal provides a way for a student to go back and reflect upon their initial reactions to an experience as a way to more fully learn about a culture.

Facilitation: Keeping a journal for culture and another for language learning may have definite advantages. Designing and facilitating activities that involve journal entries is one way in which program coordinators can promote journal writing among students. Providing some direction to students, particularly those who have never kept journals, on how to keep a journal that will have long-term benefits. To highlight some of these benefits, use examples of journal entries written by yourself or former study abroad students.

Styles of communication *(p. 122 Students')*

Low- and high-context communication *(p. 123 Students', p. O Professionals')*

Objective(s): To instruct students in two basic classifications of communication that differ substantially. Encourage students to begin thinking about the challenges of communicating interculturally.

Facilitation: Students may have difficulty at first in defining low- and high-context communication, so at least from the outset the adjectives "direct" and "indirect" can be used for clarification purposes, with recognition that "low and high" represent two broader categories of communicative processes. You can pose to a group of students the questions:

- "What difficulties can you see for a person from a low-context culture going to a country with a high-context communication culture?" (It's difficult for a low-context person to understand what's going on—they don't know how to read the cues. In short, they feel lost.)
- "What are the challenges for people traveling the other way?" (There are

often two very different reactions. One is information overload. In low-context cultures, so much is written down – like in this Guide! – and said that a low-context person is skilled at figuring out what's important in the message. A high-context person in this environment feels overwhelmed – or patronized).

Help students to understand if there is an overall feel as to whether or not the cultures in the host environment are more high or low context. Also, help students to understand if there are specific environments that they will be in that are more high or low context.

Specific communication styles *(p. 124 Students')*

Contrast your communication styles with host nationals *(p. 124 Students')*

Objective(s): To have students begin to think about the diversity of communication styles and which ones they prefer or have tended to use in the past.

Facilitation: It may be the first time students have given thought to differences in communication styles, and they may not be aware yet of the communication styles of their host country. Students should be encouraged to seek out an informant from the host country to converse with (in English or the target language) for this activity. Have students re-group for a discussion of what they have learned using questions from the Students' Guide. You can also help facilitate the students' learning by giving specific examples of when certain styles are used and are appropriate in the cultures of the host environment.

It is important to acknowledge that we probably use many of the styles listed here and others as well. However, we may have a somewhat different sense of when it is appropriate or best to use certain styles. Try to point out the advantages of specific styles you see used by U.S. Americans and by host nationals.

Communicating nonverbally *(p. 130 Students')*

Students in-country will no doubt come to the realization that there are differences in how the hosts communicate with them nonverbally. Unfortunately, despite such visible evidence, there is much resistance on the part of the students to engage in behaviors that, although culturally appropriate, seem unnatural and uncomfortable. Everything from differences in greetings, when to touch and when not to, whether to use direct eye contact or to bow, will require the student to learn new ways of acting and interacting.

Observing gestures and understanding their meanings *(p. 131 Students')*

Objective(s): To convey graphically to students how nonverbal behaviors have a cultural basis, and that learning nonverbals is important for communicating effectively in the host country; to highlight how many common gestures can mean something completely different in another culture.

Facilitation: This could be used as a fun preliminary exercise for a session on intercultural communication. This self-test can also be done in small groups or discussed in a large

group. In a mixed group with students from diverse countries and cultures it may work well to have students speak from experience and demonstrate nonverbals that are different from those commonly used in the United States. Whenever possible, model the nonverbal behaviors, have students attempt them, and have students give their reactions to these unfamiliar behaviors.

Three important forms on nonverbal communication *(p. 132 Students')*

Eye contact survey *(p. 133 Students', p. P Professionals')*

Objective(s): To realize that eye contact can vary across cultures.

Facilitation: Certainly there is much personal variation in how much eye contact one maintains in each of the situations outlined in this activity. Despite these personal differences, people often think that what they have been taught is the preferred way of doing things. Encourage students to think back on how they learned the appropriate use of eye contact for these situations in their home country.

Personal distance survey *(p. 134 Students', p. Q Professionals')*

Objective(s): To realize that personal space/distance can vary across cultures.

Facilitation: You can use this as a preliminary exercise for students that allows them to experience differences in personal space. Have students pair off and stand directly in front of one another with toes of shoes touching. Have each student in the pair take turns doing self-introductions. Reassemble as a group and ask students how they felt while doing this activity. This is likely to be a very uncomfortable activity for many U.S. Americans because of the unwritten rule of standing at arms length when speaking with someone who is not a close friend.

Touching behavior survey *(p. 135 Students', p. R Professionals')*

Objective(s): To realize that touching behavior can vary across cultures.

Facilitation: This may be an excellent vehicle for introducing codes of sexually appropriate or sexually harassing behavior – according to the standards of the host culture. For example, while a man touching a woman on the shoulder at work in the U.S. may be a sign of sexual harassment, no such comparison may exist in the host culture. Likewise, there may be occasions where you have seen U.S. Americans inappropriately touch people or cultural artifacts in the host culture.

Nonverbals used in host country greetings *(p. 136 Students', p. S Professionals')*

Objective(s): To investigate, learn, and contrast nonverbal communication skills specific to the host country environment; to integrate knowledge of a number of nonverbals by observing authentic communicative encounters.

Facilitation: This activity requires students to go into more depth and may be suitable for a homework assignment that requires interviewing a cultural informant from the target country. As a result of much variation and exceptions for many host country patterns, facilitators may require students to interview more than one host national (preferably of different gender or age). You can lead a discussion and debriefing using the questions provided.

Pauses and silence in communication *(p. 136 Students')*

Journaling: making sense out of intercultural communication *(p. 137 Students')*

Objective(s): To give students the opportunity to practice participant observation related to communicative behaviors; provides student opportunities to hone these journaling skills.

Facilitation: This activity provides students with a user-friendly template to follow that will get them started on the road to journaling. Students may want to team up in groups of two or three rather than do the exercise on their own. Whatever the grouping, it is important that each student does the journaling activity. After students have completed the assignment have them give short presentations on their findings. In addition to the questions in the Students' Guide, ask what stood out as the most significant cultural differences, and discuss how students could go about finding out more about their particular cultural groups.

Note: This may not be an easy assignment and could well prove very challenging for many students. Some students, even if they have lived close to ethnic minority groups their entire lives, may have had little, if any, interaction with members of those cultures. Through this particular activity the program coordinator can probably discover which stages of intercultural sensitivity the students are in. Students who tend to minimize cultural differences may come up with very little or see few differences. Students in defense may notice more differences, but there will be a negative connotation attached to them. This activity may serve as a ideal way of emphasizing that other cultures are simply different and should not be viewed negatively.

Another issue that requires awareness on the part of students is to have respect for the culture they are observing and that any contact with interviewees needs to be done with care. People may feel that they are being observed or singled out because they are different, and they could react strongly against it. Others may actually enjoy the attention and are happy to share information.

Preparing to return home *(p. 139 Students')*

Leaving the country *(p. 139 Students')* ***and A thoughtful return*** *(p. 141 Students', p. T-1 Professionals')*

Objective(s): To give students an opportunity to begin thinking about returning home so they consider how they want to leave the country, what they have learned, and how they might have changed as a result of study abroad.

Facilitation: The days prior to departure are potentially hectic for you and the students.

Taking a few moments for students to reflect upon their experiences is invaluable to them as it begins the essential process of making the study abroad experience one of lifelong learning. It also is invaluable to you as it gives you a chance to see students' growth and consideration of the host cultures.

Post-Study-Abroad Strategies

Dealing with the emotional challenges of study abroad *(p. 144 Students')*

Reacting to the changes *(p. 145 Students', p. U Professionals')*

Objective(s): To assist students in their process of re-entry into U.S. American life; to contribute toward their future intercultural and international interests by valuing their new intercultural identities and considering specific ways in which they have changed.

Facilitation: When students return home after a lengthy time away, their process of readjustment to the U.S. as well as making sense of what they experienced abroad are often the most neglected aspects of the study abroad experience. However, given the opportunity, there is much you can do to assist a student's re-entry to the U.S., help them maintain their newly acquired language and culture skills, and tips on how they can continue their international education. Chances are, you will have had the experience of returning home from a substantial time spent abroad feeling glad you went but at the same time out-of-place and misunderstood by others who have not experienced what you have. Relating your own experiences in the field and how you dealt with re-entry shock will allow students to benefit from your first-hand knowledge.

Suggestions for facilitating post-study-abroad sessions:

- Organize a post-study-abroad session or sessions for students who have recently returned from abroad. This allows students the opportunity to meet and debrief their international experiences and will help these students support each other through the readjustment process. It also gives a clear message to students that what they learned abroad has intrinsic value and is of interest to others.
- Have returnees write about their experience and submit their articles for a newsletter put out by your office.
- Have a photo contest with prizes for recent returnees.
- Hold informal seminars or question-and-answer sessions in conjunction with the international studies office or an academic department.

Because getting students together for any re-entry event is a challenge many professionals in our field face, you may want to consider these other mediums:

- Host an online chat room
- Invite students to write to you with additions to the list of challenges and strategies found on p. 146 of the Students' Guide.
- Use the old-fashioned technology of having students write an essay based on the questions in the "reacting to the changes" section of the Students' Guide.
- Provide administrative support for students to form a "returnees" club.

Balancing two cultural identities is challenging, but the rewards of being able to view issues from multiple perspectives makes it worth the effort. As much as possible, gear sessions toward having students celebrate and embrace their intercultural selves and to challenge them to consider how they will translate the experiences into life-long learning.

Examining what you have learned while abroad *(p. 147 Students')*

Seeing the U.S. and the world in a new light *(p. 149 Students', p. V Professionals')*

Understanding yourself differently *(p. 149 Students')*

Identity challenges *(p. 152 Students')*

Objective(s): To provide students a forum for considering how their views toward their home country have changed since engaging in study abroad, how they view themselves differently, and how their identity may be different.

Facilitation: Many students face a new paradox – how to both love or have pride in their home country, yet despise aspects of the politics and culture to which they may have previously been blind. Certainly not all students will be challenged with this paradox; however, it is common enough that we wanted to devote a specific post-study-abroad section to this phenomenon. If conducting this activity in groups, make sure to give the students plenty of individual reflection time so that the following discussion and debriefing can be meaningful. Do not feel that you must defend any particular position of the U.S. or the world – your role is to facilitate the students' experiences and to ask questions to clarify your understanding, not to challenge them or to change their minds.

The second and third areas of "understanding yourself differently" and "identity concerns" are common topics in our field of study abroad. The questions outlined can form an excellent basis for a group discussion or required journaling. Again, in any group discussion, your role is to facilitate the students' experiences. The one case where you may need to challenge students is if they are expressing an extremely negative view of the host culture or of the U.S. culture. Encourage them to see advantages to both cultures.

Strategies for long-term maintenance of language and culture learning *(p. 157 Students')*

Objective(s): To convey to students that the learning doesn't need to end simply because their study abroad experience is over; encourage them to take a life-long approach to international education and self-development.

Facilitation: The following are specific suggestions you might consider to assist returnees in the maintenance and further deepening of their language and intercultural skills.

- Hold international/intercultural study fairs and seminars to include returnees who can talk about their experiences.
- Make good use of the knowledge and skills these students possess in other areas: as volunteers or interns on campus international organizations, tour guides for international students and visitors from their target countries. Keep a database of students for this purpose.

- Work with the career planning or job placement center on campus to provide students with information about careers in which they can use their international experience and language skills. Provide information about international employment or internships for interested students.

- Recognize the accomplishments of returnees formally upon graduation by noting their study abroad experience in their transcript or have special sashes or tassels made for graduation of students who have studied overseas.

MAXIMIZING STUDY ABROAD

Program Professionals' Guide

Section V:
Strategies for Language Learning and Use

How the language section is structured

The language section includes language learning and language use strategies for students with differing interests, at different language skill levels, and with differing learning style and language strategy preferences. For easy access, the material is presented according to language skill areas as follows:

- Listening
- Learning Vocabulary
- Speaking to Communicate
- Reading for Comprehension
- Writing
- Translation Strategies

In the beginning of each topic area you will find a section called "Pre-Departure Activities." If students have questions regarding a specific skill, such as the best vocabulary to learn or the best way to practice writing in the foreign language before they actually go abroad, encourage them to go directly to the beginning of each chapter for specific pre-departure tips.

Students should be directed to the topics they are most interested in, based on their results of the strategy surveys. Each topic concludes with a section on Post-Study Abroad Activities and includes much advice from past students on keeping the language skills alive.

Using the guide

You can help your students use the Students' Guide, regardless of your own level of proficiency in a foreign language. The main thing is that the students see the link between the Language Strategy Survey and the Students' Guide. Students should refer to the guide for more information on any strategy items on the survey that may enhance their own language learning and language use experiences.

If you are not proficient in a second language, consider:

- sharing with the students moments of success you have had with another language.
- motivating them to try the strategies, even selecting a few that you believe would be helpful to you.
- sharing with them ways which you have struggled as a language learner, suggesting what they might do so they can lessen the struggle, and showing them that difficulties are part of the learning process.

If you are quite proficient in another language, consider:

- sharing with students how knowing another language has been beneficial to you personally and professionally.
- discussing how strategies have helped you to become a better language learner.
- identifying certain skill areas in which specific strategies have had an impact and illustrate what you mean.

It is important to be aware that many students may be anxious about the language component of the study abroad experience. They may be unsure about their proficiency in the language or think that language may not be a priority for them while they are abroad. For instance, it may be that some students have not had much success at learning languages in the past but are highly motivated to learn about the culture. Although an affinity for the culture is a perfectly valid reason for going abroad, it is important for students to know that even a little knowledge of a foreign language can serve as a vital route to comprehending the culture. Some cultural aspects are next to impossible to grasp without having any language skills. The Students' Guide contains substantial information on linking language and culture. You can help them by encouraging them to take the surveys and follow up with the sections in the Students' Guide that refer to areas they identify as needing improvement.

Defining second language learning and use strategies

The following represents a broad definition of second language learning and use strategies and includes the steps learners select to improve how they *learn* a second language and how they *use* it in various settings. Language learning strategies include:

- identifying the material that needs to be learned,
- distinguishing what the learner is trying to master from other material if need be (for example, distinguishing words that are similar in sound in a language or dialect, such as *terminar* and *terminal* in Puerto Rican Spanish),
- grouping for easier learning (e.g., grouping vocabulary by category into nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and so forth),
- repeatedly putting oneself in contact with the material (e.g., through classroom tasks or the completion of homework assignments), and
- memorizing when it does not seem to be acquired naturally (whether through making associations, the use of associations or mnemonics, or some other memory technique).

STRATEGIES FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING AND USE PART I:

Facilitating the Use of Language-Learning Strategies

This section offers specific suggestions on the facilitation of activities in the Students' Guide. The activities are set up to assist students while they are abroad and give them advice about how to improve their language skills through the use of strategies. There are a variety of activities presented that may only be possible when done in the host country; however, many of the activities can be successfully adapted for effective learning in the home country as well.

Listening

The listening section is most useful for students who need extra practice in listening to and focusing on the most important parts of what the speaker(s) is saying in order to ensure comprehension of the message.

Pre-departure listening activities *(p. 165 Students', p. W Professionals')*

Objective(s): To help students increase their exposure to the language prior to departure so that not only will they receive more practice in listening, but they will also become more aware of their listening skills.

Facilitation: Since some of your students may dream of near fluency from just a few months exposure to a second language, help them set realistic language-learning goals. Suggesting or even facilitating activities similar to those in the Students' Guide will improve your students' chances of becoming effective and confident listeners. For example, you might organize a language practice group where they can meet native speakers of the target language to have authentic input to listen to. Suggest that this activity be an equal exchange by having the students offer to compensate the native speakers by helping them with their English.

What does a competent listener do? *(p. 166 Students')*

Objective(s): To provide learners the opportunity to think about the skills that are most important in effective listening; to determine which skills they are best at and which they would find most useful to spend more time on.

Facilitation: The activity can simply be used as a checklist. You could expand by including specific examples in the target language – using the checklist as a kind of quiz. In discussing the activity with students, ask students:

- To write, "What makes for a good listener?" Write their responses on the board.
- To have the students complete the checklist.

- How many of the listening skills they were able to identify in their initial responses to the question, "What makes for a good listener?"
- To take a few moments to reflect upon how they can improve their skills in listening. Then direct them to the section on "Strategies to become a better listener" (p. 167 in the Students' Guide).

Strategies to become a better listener *(p. 167 Students')*

Objective(s): To provide learners with the opportunity to focus on very specific strategies they can use to improve their listening.

Facilitation: Encourage students to try two to three improvement strategies in the next week. They should keep a journal about their experiences and/or report back to the group at the end of the week about their progress. Pay special attention to strategy eight: "Recognize different types of speech according to the speaker or setting." Ask the students to generate a list of opportunities for language exposure. Our experience from student self-reports is that students often have difficulty creating opportunities for using their new language skills outside of the classroom and university setting. Getting students to generate their own list is a great way for them to consider the hidden opportunities that they can take advantage of – and that they might need to initiate.

Make the most of your language classroom *(p. 174 Students')*

Objective(s): To make students aware that learning a language does not happen through simply being around another language and to give students ideas for becoming active language learners.

Facilitation: Depending on your program design, you could require students to bring samples of the target language to class, such as summaries of readings, prepared questions for the lecture, a short story to tell to help them get prepared and take responsibility for the learning of the language – in and out of the classroom.

Avoid faking that you understand the conversation *(p. 174 Students')*

Objective(s): To make students aware of the cover strategies that they might be using in the classroom. When students recognize that this strategy won't help them learn the language, they may choose to avoid faking comprehension, admit that they do not understand, and possibly learn language as a consequence.

Facilitation: Try setting up a role-play where a student is in a classroom where the teacher is presenting some particularly challenging grammar points. Have students act as if they understand the material even though it is going completely over their heads. Have the other students brainstorm other ways that they have (or have seen someone else) faked understanding in order to make a good impression or not draw attention to themselves. Ask students why using cover strategies might slow own their language learning.

Understand different types of speech *(p. 174 Students')*

Objective(s): To help students recognize different types of speech so that they are able to focus on the types of speech for their level and to understand the levels to which they may aspire. For example, a new learner on a short-term program may have a goal of understanding a limited amount of "foreigner talk" while an advanced speaker, already able to understand several types of talk, should aim to understand "native-speaker" talk. Molly Zahn's words in the Students' Guide brings these message home:

> *It can be difficult to gauge your skills in some of these areas while still in the U.S. For example, I had NO IDEA how bad my comprehension of conversational-speed German between Germans was until I got here – I had simply never been exposed to it before because, of course, my teachers and classmates at my university didn't talk like that. However, if you begin to recognize your strengths and weaknesses before you go, you can focus on improving your skills. This will make your life dramatically easier when you get there! ~ Molly Zahn, Germany*

Facilitation: Have your students identify the types of speech they already understand and the types they will need to understand during this study abroad experience. It may even be possible for you to bring in a video of these different types of speech and have them "test" themselves for their comprehension levels. Next, have them brainstorm how they can get more exposure to the specific type of talk they aspire to understand. Then, have students commit to specific strategies they will use during their study abroad from the "Improve your active listening" section on page 176.

Language shock and language fatigue *(p. 177 Students')*

Objective(s): Much time in study abroad is dedicated to the topic of "culture shock," while little time is spent on the absolutely draining experience of language shock and language fatigue. This section helps students recognize how common it is to feel overwhelmed – and gives strategies for dealing with this shock and fatigue.

Facilitation: The Culture Strategies part of the Students' Guide covers in some detail the changes a student undergoes as a result of study abroad. It is not an exaggeration to emphasize the role that language plays in cross-cultural adjustment and intercultural identity. For most students, not being able to communicate in the host language will be a significant source of frustration that will affect their emotional state in the country and hence, their motivation to continue to make efforts in the language. Using the target language everyday is also a tiring endeavor for students since they are constantly exercising mental capacities that they may not be accustomed to using.

This said, probably few people who have studied language and used it successfully abroad regret the effort that it took to get to that point. But the process is difficult at times for learners who might not be able to see the light at the end of the tunnel. The following are some suggestions for program professionals to help students who are struggling with the target language:

- Convey to students that learning a foreign language is not simply a means to communicate, but that it opens up a whole new world of meaning to the learner.

- Encourage students to take language breaks to reflect, or just to give themselves a chance to rest.
- Share your own experiences, if any, with language shock and language fatigue and the strategies you have used to cope with and overcome these barriers. If students have studied abroad before, invite them to share their experiences, as well.
- Include quotes in program brochures from former study abroad students about what being able to use the host language meant to them while they were abroad.

Post-study-abroad listening activities *(p. 179 Students', p. X Professionals')*

Objective(s): To offer students suggestions of ways to continue their exposure to the target language even after returning from the host country.

Facilitation: Do some research on local organizations, commercial enterprises, and other establishments that would have native speakers of your students' target languages. When they return, provide them with information so that they can make contact with these local establishments and possibly participate in their activities or even obtain employment where they can continue to improve their listening skills.

Learning Vocabulary

It may be that many of your students will have trouble learning and remembering the large amount of vocabulary that they encounter daily from different sources while studying in a foreign country. This chapter offers ideas on how to learn, store in memory, and use vocabulary without having to resort to rote memorization.

Pre-departure vocabulary learning activities *(p. 181 Students', p. Y Professionals')*

Objective(s): To help students focus their vocabulary learning efforts.

Facilitation: Often students feel just too busy before departing to do much language study. Encourage them to take just a few minutes a day to improve their vocabulary. Adding 10 words a day – or even 5 – for 20 days before departure will give them 100 to 200 new words to use in conversation. This may be enough to boost their confidence to get more involved in the culture and, thus, more involved in learning the language.

How do you learn vocabulary?: The Aymara activity *(p. 182 Students', p. Z-1 Professionals')*

Objective(s): To help students become aware of what they do mentally to learn new words. Some may already be making use of association strategies and not even know it. The ultimate goal of this section and the next is to help students become more successful at making associations that will aid in committing new vocabulary to memory.

Facilitation: This Aymara activity has been used with hundreds of students, staff, and faculty to help them become more aware of association techniques. Take time to go through

the entire activity step-by-step to ensure that students are being challenged to be aware of how they currently learn vocabulary words and of strategies they can use to improve their learning. While some students may question the use of Aymara in this exercise – an authentic tribal language spoken in South America – rather than the actual target language, explain that using an entirely new language heightens the focus on the ways one learns vocabulary for the first time and not just how one recalls it in the moment. In other words, while you may have used an association to initially remember a word, if you use the word frequently, you may not have integrated it into your stored memory and may no longer need to use an association to recall the word.

Learning vocabulary by association *(p. 185 Students')*

Objective(s): This activity is connected with the Aymara activity above by providing a chart of specific association techniques.

Facilitation: Research has shown that using associations is more effective than mere rote memory. Share with students the association techniques you use. For students who already use a number of association techniques, challenge them to use even more. For those new to using associations, share a few simple tricks that work for you so that they see it is actually an easy process.

Other means of learning vocabulary: pre-departure and in-country *(p. 190 Students')*

Objective(s): To offer students more strategies for increasing their vernacular in the target language.

Facilitation: Encourage students to practice these strategies for learning more about the vocabulary in their target language. When working with students one-on-one, work out a semantic map as in activity 7, "Creating a visual map," for a specific encounter the student is concerned about (i.e., meeting the host family for the first time, making a phone call, asking for help finding an item in the grocery store, or explaining pain or illness to a doctor), or make flashcards for a list of vocabulary that needs to be learned for a quiz in class. Help students locate a dictionary that is right for them, but remind them to use it sparingly. Have students read through the section on strategies in the Students' Guide.

What native speakers know about the vocabulary in their language *(p. 194 Students')*

Objective(s): To encourage students to consider why speaking with native speakers is so important by pointing out the specific types of things native speakers know that non-native speakers may not.

Facilitation: Invite native speakers to come to the pre-departure orientation and discuss their suggestions as to culturally appropriate ways to get involved with native speakers in the host country. Also, have the speakers share some common language and cultural mistakes they see U.S. Americans make. Encourage your students that these can be minimized and/or used as great learning moments if you really are able to form good relations with the host nationals.

Post-study-abroad vocabulary activities *(p. 195 Students', p. AA Professionals')*

Objective(s): To encourage students to keep learning vocabulary in order to improve their language skills upon return – and not merely maintain the level they achieved in-country.

Facilitation: Have students brainstorm ways they can keep learning vocabulary and have them commit to two to four strategies for doing so.

Speaking to Communicate

Speaking in a foreign language can be one of the most difficult skills to acquire for some students. It is often suggested to new language learners that "practice makes perfect," and this still holds true, but what we want them to know is that there are specific strategies they can implement while they are practicing.

Pre-departure speaking activities *(p. 197 Students', p. BB Professionals')*

Objective(s): To encourage students to practice their speaking in the target language as much as possible prior to departure. This is especially critical for those who have a great deal of anxiety about speaking once they arrive.

Facilitation: Explain to students that being anxious about speaking does not disappear when they board the plane and land in the host country, surrounded by the host language. If students want to speak the language, they need to begin now. Brainstorm with students ways that they can practice speaking before they depart. Have them pick one or two strategies they can start using right away to practice speaking.

Advice to help improve your speaking skills *(p. 198 Students')*

Objective(s): To encourage students to take advantage of opportunities for speaking the target language while they are abroad.

Facilitation: This background helps learners to understand the complexities of speech and to recognize the necessity for being strategic in learning and using the second language. One problem many students abroad have is that for various reasons (cultural and language problems included) they do not make sufficient effort toward getting to know native speakers. Many spend their free time out of class exclusively with other international students and speak predominantly in English. Program staff can strongly recommend that students find opportunities for communicating with native speakers in their area. You can advise them to take a close look at this section, including the pre- and post-study-abroad sections, to find ways to make conversing with native speakers less intimidating. Finally, share your own experiences, if you have any, of how you may have become comfortable speaking a target language by using it more frequently.

Learning from your mistakes *(p. 203 Students')*

Objective(s): To make students aware of an area of language that most students don't consider until they are corrected. Students can prevent uncomfortable situations and unproductive correction by learning strategies for dealing with and having some control over correction of their errors – not to mention how they can make use of the error correction to improve their language skills.

Facilitation: Have students consider when they have been corrected in the past, how they have felt when corrected (how they prefer/prefer not to be corrected), and how to make the most use of the correction offered. When finished discussing the issue, students should be directed to p. 203 of the Students' Guide for some of our strategies.

Creating opportunities for speaking the language in-country *(p. 204 Students')*

Objective(s): To give students the tools to gather courage, seek out opportunities for speaking, and make constructive decisions regarding choices that will arise in the study abroad experience where speaking is a factor.

Facilitation: Ask students to read the text, "Creating opportunities for speaking the language in-country" on p. 204 of the Students' Guide. Arrange the students into groups of three or four. Divide the subtopics into manageable sections depending on the number of students you have. Assign a topic for each group to discuss (ask them to discuss what it meant to them and what they expect it to mean for them in their host country). Finally, have each group present (on the board or overhead projector, if available) three main points from their discussions: the main idea of their section of the reading, some possible suggestions for students while they are abroad, and one thing they plan to do (or commit to doing) while they are abroad to enhance their speaking skills and broaden their opportunities. Wrap up with a brief discussion as a whole group about the most useful suggestions they heard.

On a daily basis, while you are advising study abroad students, keep these strategies handy – especially for the shyer students. Assist them in finding a homestay opportunity, a job, or another opportunity for speaking the target language abroad.

Beyond knowing the vocabulary *(p. 207 Students')*

Objective(s): To assist learners in determining what kind of speech is appropriate for which situations (what can be said where and when) and how to say it. Since speaking entails so much more than simply putting the correct words into their correct forms, students need to be aware of the sociocultural aspects of speech—that people use specific words or phrases not just to convey the meaning with words, but to show respect and politeness, and to indicate their intention.

Facilitation: Included in this section are a number of activities that promote the ability to consider speech acts and appropriateness in a new language and culture. Specific situations that characterize different dilemmas in the U.S. can be found on p. 207 of the Students' Guide. Discuss how each of these might be handled in-country – literally, what would be

said (if anything), to whom, and in what tone – would be involved. Continue the facilitation by leading the students through each of the scenarios, beginning on p. 208. The exercise on apologizing gets learners to think about how they approach apologies in their native language and how it may differ in the foreign language and culture.

Post-study-abroad speaking activities *(p. 214 Students', p. DD Professionals')*

Objective(s): For students to actively consider how they will maintain their speaking opportunities once they've returned home.

Facilitation: As suggested earlier, keep yourself well informed on the local campus clubs, restaurants, newspapers, and websites to guide your students toward finding activities back at home that will allow them to maintain their speaking practice.

Reading for Comprehension

Being able to read in the host language opens up a whole new world for study abroad students. Certainly, being able to read a daily newspaper offers insights simply not available in an English or international version. Help to open up this new world to your students by encouraging them to read as much as possible in the host language.

Pre-study-abroad reading activities *(p. 215 Students', p. EE Professionals')*

Objective(s): To encourage students to read materials other than language texts before they leave for their study abroad experience.

Facilitation: Help your students became aware of local resources in the native language. Bring samples to meetings with students. Have them look for sources through the internet. If possible, share your own library with students or ask returned students to bring in materials to share with new students.

Getting the most from your reading *(p. 216 Students')*

Objective(s): To provide specific strategies to learners on how to increase reading comprehension, remember what was read, and receive feedback.

Facilitation: Certainly the tips that we often follow for reading in our native language apply to reading in a second language. However, students may need to be encouraged to become more aware of the strategies that work for them in their native language and may also need to be much more disciplined when working in a second language. For example, when reading in your native language, you can usually read the text and then a few hours later still recall the gist of the storyline. When reading in a second language, you may not be as likely to recall as much about the text unless you make a few notes to yourself about the material or rehearse some of the text in your head. (Of course, this depends on your learning-style preference as well!)

During your time abroad *(p. 220 Students')*

Objective(s): To encourage students to gather reading materials unavailable to them in their home country.

Facilitation: Describing or showing students some sample materials (children's books, popular novels, or recipes for local foods) that are found only in the host country will increase the students' motivation to seek these materials out on their own.

Writing

Most study abroad students probably do not have extensive writing experience in the target language (especially if it is their first trip abroad). In the classroom, they spend time writing simple sentences that follow a particular grammar structure, and do not go much beyond that until they reach at least the intermediate or advanced language level. However, even though they may not be writing for homework, it doesn't mean that they cannot practice on their own outside of class. This chapter offers strategies for dealing with writing for a variety of purposes in one's target language.

Pre-study-abroad writing activities *(p. 223 Students', p. FF Professionals')*

Objective(s): To have students overcome their anxieties about their first interactions in the host country by writing down what they might say.

Facilitation: During a pre-departure orientation meeting, try some of these facilitation strategies:

- Have students mentally picture their first encounters in the host country. Ask them to pair up and role play what they will say to one another.
- Have students write down an introduction they can use with host families, instructors, and others. Then, ask for volunteers to come forward and role play these first meetings.
- Have students begin their journals with what they would like to say to their hosts upon arrival. Leave time in the pre-departure meeting for students to ask about appropriate topics and common interactions with hosts upon arrival.
- Have students try writing a real or imaginary e-mail message or snail mail letter to a host country contact or even a more academic essay, in order to get have an experience in writing text intended to be read and not said. Just as speaking more facilitates speaking, so writing more facilitates writing.

Advice from writers *(p. 223 Students')* ***and Feedback on written work*** *(p. 224 Students')*

Objective(s): To give advanced language students step-by-step instructions on how to make effective use of strategies that are most useful to writers of a second language. Since writing strategies involve a process, students often have the time to reflect on each step while improving on their piece of writing. Students need not be overwhelmed by a writing assignment in the foreign language.

Facilitation: The strategies described here are generally directed more toward higher-level language learners because of the complexity of style and commitment involved in engaging in these strategies. For example, for the sixth piece of advice, there is the assumption that students will have an extensive enough vocabulary from which to choose the right words. On the other hand, these strategies could be useful at any level if you look at the last one, which discusses the importance of taking a break and distancing oneself from the text. It is important for writers of all levels to take some time away from the writing to reflect or to think about something completely different than what they are writing. Students will have a better frame of mind when they come back to the piece of writing at a later time.

A special means of getting feedback: using the reformulation technique *(p. 225 Students')*

Objective(s): To encourage advanced students to engage the help of a native speaker in an effort improve the authenticity and appropriateness of their written text.

Facilitation: Part of the process of writing includes the need for feedback. The particular form of feedback detailed in this guide is called *reformulation*. The reformulation technique of enlisting the help of a native speaker can be very effective and offers learning possibilities for both the writer and the reformulator. Some students may feel that requesting such help is too much to ask of native speakers, but many will be glad to oblige, especially if the piece of writing is short. For a paper of any length, however, it may be best to plan on compensating the native speaker. This said, some natives may welcome the opportunity to reformulate someone's writing (or even a research paper) as an opportunity to learn that genre of writing.

Please note: Students should take care in selecting reformulators, especially if they write in an academic field that uses quite a lot of technical language. A reformulator outside of this field will not necessarily know the terms that are being used by the writer.

Another suggestion you can make is to look for a reformulator who enjoys teaching or editing. For instance, you may want to help your students locate good tutors. Some useful examples are provided in this section to give you and your students a clearer picture of the task of reformulation.

Reformulation exercise: You can help connect students with native speakers willing to reformulate the essay that the student has written. Print out an instruction sheet from the Students' Guide for the native speakers so they know exactly what type of feedback they are to give. Have the student report about the impact of this process on writing in the target language.

Discussion concerning the reformulation technique: The technique of reformulation has much promise, although it is not free of problems. While it is important to find a native reformulator who writes reasonably well, even if only an average writer, language learners still benefit by having a model of native-language input. In learning how to say things correctly or appropriately in a target language, we frequently find ourselves turning for assistance to any native we are speaking to, regardless of whether the person is a qualified language teacher. In learning how to write, we could also utilize our native-speaker resources more fully by requesting reformulations of written work from target language natives around us, at the university, or in our own neighborhoods.

Another issue related to reformulation is that students may make effective use of the reformulation offered them if they misunderstand the reformulation or lack interest in it. There is then a need to elicit the cooperation of either a classroom teacher or another native who is capable of explaining the reformulated words and phrases. Often native speakers are unable to explain why one expression is more appropriate than another. To them, "it just sounds right."

There is also the issue of whether non-native teachers or other non-natives with high proficiency in the target language are capable of doing a competent job of reformulating. For simpler writing in the target language, such non-natives may be acceptable as reformulators. However, for more complex writing, even someone with near-native proficiency may lack some of the stylistic subtleties of the language that the reformulation technique can tap and draw attention to. Therefore, the optimal route would be to find a native reformulator who is not necessarily a teacher.

Notwithstanding potential problems, there is much to be gained from giving the reformulation technique a try. There is more opportunity to obtain deeper feedback than in the simple correction of surface errors, which is often what learners receive as feedback on their essays. Students become exposed to new idioms and more varied ways of expressing ideas that are meaningful to them.

Writing a term paper in the target language *(p. 230 Students')*

Objective(s): To help students recognize there will be similarities and differences in the conventions of writing a term paper in one's host or native language.

Facilitation: Provide students with examples in writing and verbally of how writing conventions are similar and different across the cultures.

Post-study-abroad writing activities *(p. 230 Students', p. GG Professionals')*

Objective(s): To make students aware of opportunities to maintain their writing skills when they return from abroad.

Facilitation: Remind students that before they leave the host country they should record addresses (both email and postal mail) so that they can continue a less expensive form of communication in the target language with host families and friends from the host country. The students can use it as another opportunity to practice their writing skills. Furthermore, they can ask that their writing partner include feedback on the student's writing in the reply letter, which is especially simple with email. Of course, students may wish to limit such feedback to specific words, phrases, idioms, or speech acts (e.g., apologies, complaints) in order not to be discouraged about their writing. Sometimes too much feedback can detract from the joy of written expression, depending on the goal of the writing.

For particularly advanced students, help them find a newspaper or other publication for which they might enter an article or some other piece of writing. They might even find an opportunity to be hired by a local newspaper or magazine company.

Translation Strategies

When students first begin to learn foreign language, there are those who will engage in a lot of translating directly back and forth between the target language and their native language. In general, this tends to be problematic since most if not all languages cannot be translated on a word for word basis due to dissimilarities between the two languages. However, for novice learners, until they have a firmer grasp on the intricacies of the language, including a large vocabulary, translation is nearly unavoidable. While thinking in the language may be preferable for language use with native speakers, to a certain extent every learner will be engaged in some mental and written translation. This chapter briefly touches upon ideas for judiciously employing mental and written translation strategies in language learning and use.

Objective(s): To help students use translation strategies so they can:

- Fully use the grammatical structures and vocabulary they have been taught in the classroom.
- Think about the structure or organization of the phrase or sentence before it is spoken or written will help increase accuracy of meaning.
- Discover a more natural and effective way of expressing the idea and can self-correct to achieve the desired result.

Facilitation: One main point of this section is to allow for student differences in how quickly they will come to think in the target language while they are using it. Students who appear fluent because they are able to "think" in the target language and can respond more quickly may in fact have a smaller vocabulary and make more grammatical errors than students who need to translate and as a result appear to have less fluency. Translation strategies can help them feel confident about the amount of language knowledge they already have while at the same time help them work toward greater fluency.

STRATEGIES FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING AND USE PART II:

Re-Entry and Post-Study-Abroad Language Learning

Re-entry and coming to terms with a new language identity

For students coming back home after time spent abroad, a new host of issues arise regarding how students come to terms with their new language and intercultural identities. The culture strategies section discusses in detail the feelings of "marginality" a returnee has as a result of his or her experiences abroad and the newly acquired bilingual skills somewhat reinforces these feelings.

The returnee will usually find it difficult to shift back into using only their native language. Certain thoughts, ideas, and feelings will seem more meaningful to a student if they are expressed in the foreign language, but of course people back home may not understand this. Students returning to the U.S. are often forced to go "cold turkey" and no longer have an outlet or means for expressing their bilingual and bicultural selves. They feel as though a part of them is lost. Program professionals who are aware of these feelings can help to address returnees' linguistic concerns using the following suggestions:

- Organize returnee gatherings on or off campus for students who have studied the same language. Have them bring pictures of their trip and encourage members to speak in the target language by establishing the space as English-free (although for most returnees encouragement won't be necessary!).
- Send out a survey to ask returnees how they plan to continue their language learning through a general survey sent from your office to students about their study abroad experience.
- Compile a database of former study abroad students and other university and community resources for language acquisition and exchange. Make this information available as a handout or mailing to students who have returned from abroad at your institution.

MAXIMIZING STUDY ABROAD

Program Professionals' Guide

Section VI:
Orientations and Workshops:
Sequencing Suggestions and Time Frames

This section gives you recommendations as to what information could be covered in an orientation or workshop, given the time constraints you may have for your programs. Suggestions are given both for when students have their own copy of the Students' Guide and for when they do not.

Note: Handouts are available in Section VII of this guide. Page numbers are listed where appropriate.

Pre-Departure Orientation

When students do NOT have the Students' Guide

One hour for the Maximizing Study Abroad material:

Use your time to:

- discuss the helpfulness of creating generalizations and clarify how stereotypes and generalizations differ.
- conduct the "Discovering your cultural diversity" activity.
- encourage the use of journals.
- encourage students to experience some culture shock and explain that this is a good sign of cultural adjustment.

Distribute the following handouts for students to complete on their own:

- ☐ All three surveys – explain how these can help them target their strengths and weaknesses in learning styles and in culture and language strategy use *(pp. A, B, C)*
- ☐ "Joshua and the iceberg" activity *(p. E)*
- ☐ "Aymara" activity *(p. Z)*
- ☐ Pre-departure learning activities for language strategy and use *(pp. W, Y, BB, EE, FF)*
- ☐ "A thoughtful return" activity for them to complete while abroad *(p. T)*

Two hours for the Maximizing Study Abroad material:

Use your time to:

- Discuss the helpfulness of creating generalizations and clarify how stereotypes and generalizations differ.
- Conduct the "Discovering Your Cultural Diversity" activity.
- Conduct the "Aymara" activity.
- Discuss the stages of adjustment and then conduct the "Stages of Adjustment" activity. During the debriefing, let students know that to experience some culture shock and is a good sign of cultural adjustment.
- Encourage the use of journals.

Distribute these handouts for students to complete on their own:

- ☐ All three surveys – explain how these can help them target their strengths and weaknesses in learning styles and in culture and language strategy use *(pp. A, B, C)*
- ☐ "Joshua and the iceberg" activity *(p. E)*
- ☐ Pre-departure learning activities for language strategy and use *(pp. W, Y, BB, EE, FF)*
- ☐ "A thoughtful return" activity for them to complete while abroad *(p. T)*

Half Day (4 hours) for the Guide material:

Use your time to:

- have students take the language and culture strategies surveys.
- discuss the helpfulness of creating generalizations and clarify how stereotypes and generalizations differ.
- conduct the "Discovering Your Cultural Diversity" activity.
- conduct the "Aymara" activity.
- conduct the "Joshua and the iceberg" activity.
- discuss the role of values and possible value challenges previous students have faced. Then, conduct "The values chart– how I rate myself" activity.
- discuss the stages of adjustment and then conduct the "Stages of Adjustment" activity. During the debriefing, let students know that to experience some culture shock and is a good sign of cultural adjustment.
- encourage the use of journals.
- conduct the "Differentiating the phases of cultural awareness" activity.

Distribute these handouts for students to complete on their own:

- ☐ Learning Styles Survey *(p. A)*
- ☐ Pre-departure learning activities for language strategy and use *(pp. W, Y, BB, EE, FF)*
- ☐ "A thoughtful return" activity for them to complete while abroad *(p. T)*

When students do have the Students' Guide

One hour for the Maximizing Study Abroad material:

Use your time to:

- point out that the surveys are the first things that students should complete on their own.
- give students a chance to peruse through the Guide, pointing out that each language chapter has pre-departure tips.
- discuss the helpfulness of creating generalizations and clarify how stereotypes and generalizations differ.
- conduct the "Discovering Your Cultural Diversity" activity.
- walk through the journaling section and give testimonials about keeping journals.
- let students know that to experience some culture shock and is a good sign of cultural adjustment.

Two hours for the Maximizing Study Abroad material:

Use your time to:

- point out that the surveys are the first things that students should complete on their own.
- give students a chance to peruse through the Guide, pointing out that each language chapter has pre-departure tips.

- discuss the helpfulness of creating generalizations and clarify how stereotypes and generalizations differ.
- conduct the "Discovering Your Cultural Diversity" activity.
- conduct the "Aymara" activity.
- walk through the journaling section and give testimonials about keeping journals.
- discuss the stages of adjustment and then conduct the "Stages of Adjustment" activity. During the debriefing, let students know that to experience some culture shock and is a good sign of cultural adjustment.

Half Day (4 hours) for the Maximizing Study Abroad material:

Use your time to:

- have students take the language and culture strategies surveys.
- discuss the helpfulness of creating generalizations and clarify how stereotypes and generalizations differ.
- conduct the "Discovering Your Cultural Diversity" activity.
- conduct the "Aymara" activity.
- conduct the "Joshua and the iceberg" activity.
- discuss the role of values and possible value challenges previous students have faced. Then, conduct "The values chart – how I rate myself" activity.
- discuss the stages of adjustment and then conduct the "Stages of Adjustment" activity. During the debriefing, let students know that to experience some culture shock and is a good sign of cultural adjustment.
- walk through the journaling section and give testimonials about keeping journals.
- conduct the "Differentiating the phases of cultural awareness" activity.

In-Country Orientation

When students do NOT have the Students' Guide

One hour for the Maximizing Study Abroad material:

Use your time to:

- discuss the helpfulness of creating generalizations and clarify how stereotypes and generalizations differ.
- conduct the "Joshua and the iceberg" activity, pointing out specific cultural values they may encounter while in-country.
- explain the benefits of journals encourage their use.
- discuss the U curve and collect their reactions to date. Let students know that to experience some culture shock and is a good sign of cultural adjustment.

Give these handouts for students to complete on their own:

- ☐ All three surveys and explain how these can help them target their strengths and weaknesses in learning styles and in culture and language strategy use. *(p. A, B, C)*
- ☐ "Discovering Your Cultural Diversity" activity *(p. D)*
- ☐ "Aymara" activity *(p. Z)*
- ☐ "A thoughtful return" activity *(p. T)*

Two hours for the Maximizing Study Abroad material:

Use your time to:

- discuss the helpfulness of creating generalizations and clarify how stereotypes and generalizations differ.
- conduct the "Joshua and the iceberg" activity, pointing out specific cultural values they may encounter while in-country.
- conduct the "Aymara" activity.
- discuss the stages of adjustment and then conduct the "Stages of Adjustment" activity. During the debriefing, let students know that to experience some culture shock and is a good sign of cultural adjustment.

Give these handouts for students to complete on their own:

- ☐ All three surveys – explain how these can help them target their strengths and weaknesses in learning styles and in culture and language strategy use *(pp. A, B, C)*
- ☐ "Discovering your cultural diversity" activity *(p. D)*
- ☐ "A thoughtful return" activity *(p. T)*

Half Day (4 hours) for the Maximizing Study Abroad material:

Use your time to:

- have students take the language and culture strategies surveys.
- discuss the helpfulness of creating generalizations and clarify how stereotypes and generalizations differ.
- conduct the "Discovering Your Cultural Diversity" activity.
- conduct the "Aymara" activity.
- conduct the "Joshua and the iceberg" activity.
- discuss the role of values and possible value challenges previous students have faced. Then, conduct "The values chart – how I rate myself" activity.
- discuss the stages of adjustment and then conduct the "Stages of Adjustment" activity. During the debriefing, let students know that to experience some culture shock and is a good sign of cultural adjustment.
- encourage the use of journals.
- conduct the "Differentiating the phases of cultural awareness" activity.

Give these handouts for students to complete on their own:

- ☐ Learning Styles Survey *(p. A)*
- ☐ "A thoughtful return" activity *(p. T)*

When students do have the Students' Guide

One hour for the Maximizing Study Abroad material:

Use your time to:

- Point out that the surveys are the first things that students should complete on their own.
- Give students a chance to peruse through the Guide, pointing out that each language chapter has in-country tips.
- Discuss the helpfulness of creating generalizations and clarify how stereotypes and generalizations differ.
- Conduct the "Joshua and the iceberg" activity.
- walk through the journaling section and give testimonials about keeping journals.

- Let students know that to experience some culture shock and is a good sign of cultural adjustment.

Two hours for the Maximizing Study Abroad material:

Use your time to:

- point out that the surveys are the first things that students should complete on their own.
- give students a chance to peruse through the Guide, pointing out each language chapter has in-country tips.
- discuss the helpfulness of creating generalizations and clarify how stereotypes and generalizations differ.
- conduct the "Joshua and the iceberg" activity.
- conduct the "Aymara" activity.
- walk through the journaling section and give testimonials about keeping journals.
- discuss the stages of adjustment and then conduct the "Stages of Adjustment" activity. During the debriefing, let students know that to experience some culture shock and is a good sign of cultural adjustment.

Half Day (4 hours) for the Maximizing Study Abroad material:

Use your time to:

- have students take the language and culture strategies surveys.
- discuss the helpfulness of creating generalizations and clarify how stereotypes and generalizations differ.
- conduct the "Discovering Your Cultural Diversity" activity.
- conduct the "Aymara" activity.
- conduct the "Joshua and the iceberg" activity.
- discuss the role of values and possible value challenges previous students have faced. Then, conduct "The values chart – how I rate myself" activity.
- discuss the stages of adjustment and then conduct the "Stages of Adjustment" activity. During the debriefing, let students know that to experience some culture shock and is a good sign of cultural adjustment.
- walk through the journaling section and give testimonials about keeping journals.
- conduct the "Differentiating the phases of cultural awareness" activity.

If students receive a thorough pre-departure orientation and have a second in-country orientation, program staff have an ideal opportunity to delve more deeply into culture- and language-learning materials when they arrive on-site. If this is your specific situation, consider:

- giving a quiz on "Basic things you should know before you go" (p. 53)
- discussing the D-I-E model and having students go out in small groups (4 or 5) to different locations. Give them specific tasks, like a scavenger hunt. Have them price compare local markets, get information on how to register for classes, find a specific monument, etc. When they report back, have them share the specific information, publicly or in journals, a description, interpretation, and evaluation of the event. For example, internationals in the U.S. have conducted this exercise in Minneapolis and have reported that "poor people take the city bus." As facilitators, we need to have them go back and describe specifically what led to this interpretation and possibly evaluation. Were the people really poor or is it an expectation of public dress code? Are they interpreting and evaluating certain ethnicities to be poor? If the riders were truly poor, is it the location they were in? Is it the time of day? Was it unusual in any way?

- Have the students share specific reactions to the culture – whether from a few hours or days of experience. What do they like? dislike? What surprises them? What do they find to be representative of the host culture? What makes them homesick? If students have some time to conduct an activity, have them take photos that "answer" these questions and share their photos with fellow students.

Facilitating a Class

When students do NOT have the guide

Certainly the activities you select may vary a great deal based on your specific content. However, if you are working with a class that is predominantly international or predominantly U.S. American, you could conduct some of the following:

- Contrasting U.S. American views with the host country. (This activity is found only in the Students' Guide and would need to be conducted verbally if students do not have the guide, as copyright permission is not offered through CARLA for this material.)
- International perspectives on U.S. Americans. To this activity, you could contrast host nationals' experiences with U.S. Americans and other internationals, particularly focusing on behaviors related to this classroom.
- For language classrooms, any or all of the sections in the language portion of the Guide could be incorporated into the overseas experience.

Facilitating Field Trips

Depending on how much time you have with the students, some of the following may help prepare the students for an upcoming field trip:

- "Differentiating the phases of cultural awareness" activity
- Discussing the model of intercultural sensitivity
- Teaching the students about the Describe - Interpret - Evaluate (DIE) model and conducting the "debriefing in action" model
- Discussing how they could write journal entries using impressions, descriptive, narrative, and expressive sections

Preparing Students for Re-Entry

Most study abroad programs struggle to host re-entry programs when students return to their home institutions. As a result, it is critical to take advantage of the opportunities to discuss re-entry with students prior to their actual return. Furthermore, several re-entry issues truly begin with the departure from the host country – saying good-bye, considering how one has changed, and considering what changes may have occurred at home. Here are a few tips for preparing students for re-entry, whether it is through e-mail, a letter, or a group meeting:

- Have students fill out the "A thoughtful return" activity sheet.
- Share specific examples of how past students have enacted their own "thoughtful return."
- Explain to students how you have watched them develop language- and culture-learning strategies.

MAXIMIZING STUDY ABROAD

Program Professionals' Guide

Learning Style Survey:

Assessing Your Own Learning Styles

Andrew D. Cohen, Rebecca L. Oxford, and Julie C. Chi

The Learning Style Survey is designed to assess your general approach to learning. It does not predict your behavior in every instance, but it is a clear indication of your overall style preferences. For each item, circle the response that represents your approach. Complete all items. There are eleven major activities representing twelve different aspects of your learning style. When you read the statements, try to think about what you generally do when learning. It generally takes about 30 minutes to complete the survey. Do not spend too much time on any item – indicate your immediate feeling and move on to the next item.

For each item, circle your response:

0 = Never
1 = Rarely
2 = Sometimes
3 = Often
4 = Always

Part 1: HOW I USE MY PHYSICAL SENSES

1. I remember something better if I write it down.	0 1 2 3 4
2. I take detailed notes during lectures.	0 1 2 3 4
3. When I listen, I visualize pictures, numbers, or words in my head.	0 1 2 3 4
4. I prefer to learn with TV or video rather than other media.	0 1 2 3 4
5. I use color-coding to help me as I learn or work.	0 1 2 3 4
6. I need written directions for tasks.	0 1 2 3 4
7. I have to look at people to understand what they say.	0 1 2 3 4
8. I understand lectures better when professors write on the board.	0 1 2 3 4
9. Charts, diagrams, and maps help me understand what someone says.	0 1 2 3 4
10. I remember peoples' faces but not their names.	0 1 2 3 4
	A - Total _____
11. I remember things better if I discuss them with someone.	0 1 2 3 4
12. I prefer to learn by listening to a lecture rather than reading.	0 1 2 3 4
13. I need oral directions for a task.	0 1 2 3 4
14. Background sound helps me think.	0 1 2 3 4
15. I like to listen to music when I study or work.	0 1 2 3 4
16. I can understand what people say even when I cannot see them.	0 1 2 3 4
17. I remember peoples' names but not their faces.	0 1 2 3 4
18. I easily remember jokes that I hear.	0 1 2 3 4
19. I can identify people by their voices (e.g., on the phone).	0 1 2 3 4
20. When I turn on the TV, I listen to the sound more than I watch the screen.	0 1 2 3 4
	B - Total _____

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21. I'd rather start to do things, rather than pay attention to directions.	0 1 2 3 4
22. I need frequent breaks when I work or study.	0 1 2 3 4
23. I need to eat something when I read or study.	0 1 2 3 4
24. If I have a choice between sitting and standing, I'd rather stand.	0 1 2 3 4
25. I get nervous when I sit still too long.	0 1 2 3 4
26. I think better when I move around (e.g., pacing or tapping my feet).	0 1 2 3 4
27. I play with or bite on my pens during lectures.	0 1 2 3 4
28. Manipulating objects helps me to remember what someone says.	0 1 2 3 4
29. I move my hands when I speak.	0 1 2 3 4
30. I draw lots of pictures (doodles) in my notebook during lectures.	0 1 2 3 4

C - Total _____

Part 2: HOW I EXPOSE MYSELF TO LEARNING SITUATIONS

1. I learn better when I work or study with others than by myself.	0 1 2 3 4
2. I meet new people easily by jumping into the conversation.	0 1 2 3 4
3. I learn better in the classroom than with a private tutor.	0 1 2 3 4
4. It is easy for me to approach strangers.	0 1 2 3 4
5. Interacting with lots of people gives me energy.	0 1 2 3 4
6. I experience things first and then try to understand them.	0 1 2 3 4

A - Total _____

7. I am energized by the inner world (what I'm thinking inside).	0 1 2 3 4
8. I prefer individual or one-on-one games and activities.	0 1 2 3 4
9. I have a few interests, and I concentrate deeply on them.	0 1 2 3 4
10. After working in a large group, I am exhausted.	0 1 2 3 4
11. When I am in a large group, I tend to keep silent and listen.	0 1 2 3 4
12. I want to understand something well before I try it.	0 1 2 3 4

B - Total _____

Part 3: HOW I HANDLE POSSIBILITIES

1. I have a creative imagination.	0 1 2 3 4
2. I try to find many options and possibilities for why something happens.	0 1 2 3 4
3. I plan carefully for future events.	0 1 2 3 4
4. I like to discover things myself rather than have everything explained to me.	0 1 2 3 4
5. I add many original ideas during class discussions.	0 1 2 3 4
6. I am open-minded to new suggestions from my peers.	0 1 2 3 4

A - Total _____

7. I focus in on a situation as it is rather than thinking about how it could be.	0 1 2 3 4
8. I read instruction manuals (e.g., for computers or VCRs) before using the device.	0 1 2 3 4

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9. I trust concrete facts instead of new, untested ideas.	0 1 2 3 4
10. I prefer things presented in a step-by-step way.	0 1 2 3 4
11. I dislike it if my classmate changes the plan for our project.	0 1 2 3 4
12. I follow directions carefully.	0 1 2 3 4

B - Total _____

Part 4: HOW I DEAL WITH AMBIGUITY AND WITH DEADLINES

1. I like to plan language study sessions carefully and do lessons on time or early.	0 1 2 3 4
2. My notes, handouts, and other school materials are carefully organized.	0 1 2 3 4
3. I like to be certain about what things mean in a target language.	0 1 2 3 4
4. I like to know how rules are applied and why.	0 1 2 3 4

A - Total _____

5. I let deadlines slide if I'm involved in other things.	0 1 2 3 4
6. I let things pile up on my desk to be organized eventually.	0 1 2 3 4
7. I don't worry about comprehending everything.	0 1 2 3 4
8. I don't feel the need to come to rapid conclusions about a topic.	0 1 2 3 4

B - Total _____

Part 5: HOW I RECEIVE INFORMATION

1. I prefer short and simple answers rather than long explanations.	0 1 2 3 4
2. I ignore details that do not seem relevant.	0 1 2 3 4
3. It is easy for me to see the overall plan or big picture.	0 1 2 3 4
4. I get the main idea, and that's enough for me.	0 1 2 3 4
5. When I tell an old story, I tend to forget lots of specific details.	0 1 2 3 4

A - Total _____

6. I need very specific examples in order to understand fully.	0 1 2 3 4
7. I pay attention to specific facts or information.	0 1 2 3 4
8. I'm good at catching new phrases or words when I hear them.	0 1 2 3 4
9. I enjoy activities where I fill in the blank with missing words I hear.	0 1 2 3 4
10. When I try to tell a joke, I remember details but forget the punch line.	0 1 2 3 4

B - Total _____

Part 6: HOW I FURTHER PROCESS INFORMATION

1. I can summarize information easily.	0 1 2 3 4
2. I can quickly paraphrase what other people say.	0 1 2 3 4
3. When I create an outline, I consider the key points first.	0 1 2 3 4
4. I enjoy activities where I have to pull ideas together.	0 1 2 3 4
5. By looking at the whole situation, I can easily understand someone.	0 1 2 3 4

A - Total _____

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6.	I have a hard time understanding when I don't know every word.	0 1 2 3 4
7.	When I tell a story or explain something, it takes a long time.	0 1 2 3 4
8.	I like to focus on grammar rules.	0 1 2 3 4
9.	I'm good at solving complicated mysteries and puzzles.	0 1 2 3 4
10.	I am good at noticing even the smallest details regarding some task.	0 1 2 3 4

B - Total _____

Part 7: HOW I COMMIT MATERIAL TO MEMORY

1.	I try to pay attention to all the features of new material as I learn.	0 1 2 3 4
2.	When I memorize different bits of language material, I can retrieve these bits easily – as if I had stored them in separate slots in my brain.	0 1 2 3 4
3.	As I learn new material in the target language, I make fine distinctions among speech sounds, grammatical forms, and words and phrases.	0 1 2 3 4

A - Total _____

4.	When learning new information, I may clump together data by eliminating or reducing differences and focusing on similarities.	0 1 2 3 4
5.	I ignore distinctions that would make what I say more accurate in the given context.	0 1 2 3 4
6.	Similar memories become blurred in my mind; I merge new learning experiences with previous ones.	0 1 2 3 4

B - Total _____

Part 8: HOW I DEAL WITH LANGUAGE RULES

1.	I like to go from general patterns to the specific examples in learning a target language.	0 1 2 3 4
2.	I like to start with rules and theories rather than specific examples.	0 1 2 3 4
3.	I like to begin with generalizations and then find experiences that relate to those generalizations.	0 1 2 3 4

A - Total _____

4.	I like to learn rules of language indirectly by being exposed to examples of grammatical structures and other language features.	0 1 2 3 4
5.	I don't really care if I hear a rule stated since I don't remember rules very well anyway.	0 1 2 3 4
6.	I figure out rules based on the way I see language forms behaving over time.	0 1 2 3 4

B - Total _____

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Part 9: HOW I DEAL WITH MULTIPLE INPUTS

1. I can separate out the relevant and important information in a given context even when distracting information is present. 0 1 2 3 4
2. When I produce an oral or written message in the target language, I make sure that all the grammatical structures are in agreement with each other. 0 1 2 3 4
3. I not only attend to grammar but check for appropriate level of formality and politeness. 0 1 2 3 4

A - Total _____

4. When speaking or writing, a focus on grammar would be at the expense of attention to the content of the message. 0 1 2 3 4
5. It is a challenge for me to both focus on communication in speech or writing while at the same time paying attention to grammatical agreement (e.g., person, number, tense, or gender). 0 1 2 3 4
6. When I am using lengthy sentences in a target language, I get distracted and neglect aspects of grammar and style. 0 1 2 3 4

B - Total _____

Part 10: HOW I DEAL WITH RESPONSE TIME

1. I react quickly in language situations. 0 1 2 3 4
2. I go with my instincts in the target language. 0 1 2 3 4
3. I jump in, see what happens, and make corrections if needed. 0 1 2 3 4

A - Total _____

4. I need to think things through before speaking or writing. 0 1 2 3 4
5. I like to look before I leap when determining what to say or write in a target language. 0 1 2 3 4
6. I attempt to find supporting material in my mind before I set about producing language. 0 1 2 3 4

B - Total _____

Part 11: HOW LITERALLY I TAKE REALITY

1. I find that building metaphors in my mind helps me deal with language (e.g., viewing the language like a machine with component parts that can be disassembled). 0 1 2 3 4
2. I learn things through metaphors and associations with other things. I find stories and examples help me learn. 0 1 2 3 4

A - Total _____

3. I take learning language literally and don't deal in metaphors. 0 1 2 3 4
4. I take things at face value, so I like language material that says what it means directly. 0 1 2 3 4

B - Total _____

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Understanding your totals

Once you have totaled your points, write the results in the blanks below. Circle the higher number in each part (if they are close, circle both). Read about your learning styles starting below.

Part 1:
A ____ Visual
B ____ Auditory
C ____ Tactile / Kinesthetic

Part 2:
A ____ Extraverted
B ____ Introverted

Part 3:
A ____ Random-Intuitive
B ____ Concrete-Sequential

Part 4:
A ____ Closure-Oriented
B ____ Open

Part 5:
A ____ Global
B ____ Particular

Part 6:
A ____ Synthesizing
B ____ Analytic

Part 7:
A ____ Sharpener
B ____ Leveler

Part 8:
A ____ Deductive
B ____ Inductive

Part 9:
A ____ Field-Independent
B ____ Field-Dependent

Part 10:
A ____ Impulsive
B ____ Reflective

Part 11:
A ____ Metaphoric
B ____ Literal

Note:

Before reading the next section, understand that this is only a general description of your learning style preferences. It does not describe you *all of the time*, but gives you an idea of your tendencies when you learn. Note that in some learning situations, you may have one set of style preferences and in a different situation, another set of preferences. Also, there are both advantages and disadvantages to every style preference.

If on the sensory style preferences (visual, auditory, tactile/kinesthetic) you prefer two or all three of these senses (i.e., your totals for the categories are within 5 points or so), you are likely to be flexible enough to enjoy a wide variety of activities in the language classroom. On the other dimensions, although they appear to be in opposition, it is possible for you to have high scores on both, meaning that you do not have a preference one way or the other. Here are three examples: on the extroversion-introversion distinction, you are able to work effectively with others as well as by yourself; on the closure-open distinction, you enjoy the freedom of limited structure and can still get the task done before the deadline without stress; on the global-particular distinction, you can handle both the gist and the details easily.

Furthermore, learning style preferences change throughout your life, and you can also stretch them, so don't feel that you are constrained to one style.

Part 1: HOW I USE MY PHYSICAL SENSES

If you came out as more visual than auditory, you rely more on the sense of sight, and you learn best through visual means (books, video, charts, pictures). If you are more auditory in preference, you prefer listening and speaking activities (discussions, lectures, audio tapes, role-plays). If you have a tactile/kinesthetic style preference, you benefit from doing projects, working with objects, and moving around (games, building models, conducting experiments).

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Part 2: HOW I EXPOSE MYSELF TO LEARNING SITUATIONS

If you came out more extraverted on this survey, you probably enjoy a wide range of social, interactive learning tasks (games, conversations, discussions, debates, role-plays, simulations). If you came out more introverted, you probably like to do more independent work (studying or reading by yourself or learning with a computer) or enjoy working with one other person you know well.

Part 3: HOW I HANDLE POSSIBILITIES

If you scored more random-intuitive, you are most likely more future-oriented, prefer what can be over what is, like to speculate about possibilities, enjoy abstract thinking, and tend to disfavor step-by-step instruction. If your style preference was more concrete-sequential, you are likely to be more present-oriented, prefer one-step-at-a-time activities, and want to know where you are going in your learning at every moment.

Part 4: HOW I APPROACH TASKS

If you are more closure-oriented, you probably focus carefully on most or all learning tasks, strive to meet deadlines, plan ahead for assignments, and want explicit directions. If you are more open in your orientation, you enjoy discovery learning (in which you pick up information naturally) and prefer to relax and enjoy your learning without concern for deadlines or rules.

Part 5: HOW I RECEIVE INFORMATION

If you have a more global style preference, you enjoy getting the gist or main idea and are comfortable communicating even if you don't know all the words or concepts. If you are more particular in preference, you focus more on details and remember specific information about a topic well.

Part 6: HOW I FURTHER PROCESS INFORMATION

If you are a synthesizing person, you can summarize material well, enjoy guessing meanings and predicting outcomes, and notice similarities quickly. If you are analytic, you can pull ideas apart and do well on logical analysis and contrast tasks, and you tend to focus on grammar rules.

Part 7: HOW I COMMIT MATERIAL TO MEMORY

If you are a sharpener, you tend to notice differences and seek distinctions among items as you commit material to memory. You like to distinguish small differences and to separate memory of prior experiences from memory of current ones. You can easily retrieve the different items because you store them separately. You like to make fine distinctions among speech sounds, grammatical forms, and meaningful elements of language (words and phrases). If you are a leveler, you are likely to clump material together in order to remember it, by eliminating or reducing differences, and by focusing almost exclusively on similarities. You are likely to blur similar memories and to merge new experiences readily with previous ones. If you are concerned about accuracy and getting it all right, then the sharpener approach is perhaps preferable. If you are concerned about expediency, then being a leveler may be the key to communication.

Part 8: HOW I DEAL WITH LANGUAGE RULES

If you are a more deductive learner, you like to go from the general to the specific, to apply generalizations to experience, and to start with rules and theories rather than with specific examples. If you are a more inductive learner, you like to go from specific to general and prefer to begin with examples rather than rules or theories.

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Part 9: HOW I DEAL WITH MULTIPLE INPUTS

If you are more field-independent in style preference, you like to separate or abstract material from within a given context, even in the presence of distractions. You may, however, have less facility dealing with information holistically. If you are more field-dependent in preference, you tend to deal with information in a more holistic or "gestalt" way. Consequently you may have greater difficulty in separating or abstracting material from its context. You work best without distractions.

Part 10: HOW I DEAL WITH RESPONSE TIME

If you are a more impulsive learner, you react quickly in acting or speaking without thinking the situation through. For you, thought often follows action. If you are a more reflective learner, you think things through before taking action and often do not trust your gut reactions. In your case, action usually follows thought.

Part 11: HOW LITERALLY I TAKE REALITY

If you are a metaphoric learner, you learn material more effectively if you conceptualize aspects of it, such as the grammar system, in metaphorical terms. You make the material more comprehensible by developing and applying an extended metaphor to it (e.g., visualizing the grammar system of a given language as an engine that can be assembled and disassembled). If you are a literal learner, you prefer a relatively literal representation of concepts and like to work with language material more or less as it is on the surface.

Tips for the learner

Each style preference offers significant strengths in learning and working. Recognize your strengths to take advantage of ways you learn best. Also, enhance your learning and working power by being aware of and developing the style areas that you do *not* normally use. Tasks that do not seem quite as suited to your style preferences will help you stretch beyond your ordinary comfort zone, expanding your learning and working potential.

For example, if you are a highly global person, you might need to learn to pay more attention to detail in order to learn more effectively. If you are an extremely detail-oriented person, you might be missing out on some useful global characteristics, like getting the main idea quickly. You can develop such qualities in yourself through practice. You won't lose your basic strengths by trying something new; you will simply develop another side of yourself that is likely to be very helpful to your language learning.

If you aren't sure how to attempt new behaviors that go *beyond* your favored style, then ask your colleagues, friends, or teachers to give you a hand. Talk with someone who has a different style from yours and see how that person does it. Improve your learning or working situation by stretching your style!

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Language Strategy Use Inventory and Index

Andrew D. Cohen and Julie C. Chi

The purpose of this inventory is to find out more about yourself as a language learner and to help you discover strategies that can help you master a new language. Check the box that describes your use of each listed strategy. The categories are: ***I use this strategy and like it; I have tried this strategy and would use it again; I've never used this strategy but am interested in it***; and ***This strategy doesn't fit for me***.

Listening Strategy Use

	I use this strategy and like it	I have tried this strategy and would use it again	I've never used this strategy but am interested in it	This strategy doesn't fit for me
Strategies to increase my exposure to the target language:				
1. Attend out-of-class events where the new language is spoken.	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Listen to talk shows on the radio, watch TV shows, or see movies in the target language.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Listen to the language in a restaurant or store where the staff speak the target language.	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Listen in on people who are having conversations in the target language to try to catch the gist of what they are saying.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies to become more familiar with the sounds in the target language:				
5. Practice sounds in the target language that are very different from sounds in my own language to become comfortable with them.	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Look for associations between the sound of a word or phrase in the new language with the sound of a familiar word.	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Imitate the way native speakers talk.	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Ask a native speaker about unfamiliar sounds that I hear.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies to prepare to listen to conversation in the target language:				
9. Pay special attention to specific aspects of the language; for example, the way the speaker pronounces certain sounds.	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. Try to predict what the other person is going to say based on what has been said so far.	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. Prepare for talks and performances I will hear in the target language by reading some background materials beforehand.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies to listen to conversation in the target language:				
12. Listen for key words that seem to carry the bulk of the meaning.	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. Listen for word and sentence stress to see what native speakers emphasize when they speak.	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. Pay attention to when and how long people tend to pause.	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. Pay attention to the rise and fall of speech by native speakers – the "music" of it.	☐	☐	☐	☐

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	I use this strategy and like it	I have tried this strategy and would use it again	I've never used this strategy but am interested in it	This strategy doesn't fit for me
16. Practice "skim listening" by paying attention to some parts and ignoring others.	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. Try to understand what I hear without translating it word-for-word.	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. Focus on the context of what people are saying.	☐	☐	☐	☐
19. Listen for specific details to see whether I can understand them.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies for when I do not understand some or most of what someone says in the target language:				
20. Ask speakers to repeat what they said if it wasn't clear to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐
21. Ask speakers to slow down if they are speaking too fast.	☐	☐	☐	☐
22. Ask for clarification if I don't understand it the first time around.	☐	☐	☐	☐
23. Use the speakers' tone of voice as a clue to the meaning of what they are saying.	☐	☐	☐	☐
24. Make educated guesses about the topic based on what has already been said.	☐	☐	☐	☐
25. Draw on my general background knowledge to get the main idea.	☐	☐	☐	☐
26. Watch speakers' gestures and general body language to help me figure out the meaning of what they are saying.	☐	☐	☐	☐

What other listening strategies do I use?

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Vocabulary Strategy Use

	I use this strategy and like it	I have tried this strategy and would use it again	I've never used this strategy but am interested in it	This strategy doesn't fit for me
Strategies to learn new words:				
27. Pay attention to the structure of the new word.	☐	☐	☐	☐
28. Break the word into parts that I can identify.	☐	☐	☐	☐
29. Group words according to parts of speech (e.g., nouns, verbs).	☐	☐	☐	☐
30. Associate the sound of the new word with the sound of a word that is familiar to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐
31. Use rhyming to remember new words.	☐	☐	☐	☐
32. Make a mental image of new words.	☐	☐	☐	☐
33. List new words with other words that are related to it.	☐	☐	☐	☐
34. Write out new words in meaningful sentences.	☐	☐	☐	☐
35. Practice new action verbs by acting them out.	☐	☐	☐	☐
36. Use flash cards in a systematic way to learn new words.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies to review vocabulary:				
37. Go over new words often when I first learn them to help me remember them.	☐	☐	☐	☐
38. Review words periodically so I don't forget them.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies to recall vocabulary:				
39. Look at meaningful parts of the word (e.g., the prefix or the suffix) to remind me of the meaning of the word.	☐	☐	☐	☐
40. Make an effort to remember the situation where I first heard or saw the word or remember the page or sign where I saw it written.	☐	☐	☐	☐
41. Visualize the spelling of new words in my mind.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies to make use of new vocabulary:				
42. Try using new words in a variety of ways.	☐	☐	☐	☐
43. Practice using familiar words in different ways.	☐	☐	☐	☐
44. Make an effort to use idiomatic expressions in the new language.	☐	☐	☐	☐

What other vocabulary strategies do I use?

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Speaking Strategy Use

	I use this strategy and like it	I have tried this strategy and would use it again	I've never used this strategy but am interested in it	This strategy doesn't fit for me
Strategies to practice speaking:				
45. Practice saying new expressions to myself.	☐	☐	☐	☐
46. Practice new grammatical structures in different situations to build my confidence level in using them.	☐	☐	☐	☐
47. Think about how a native speaker might say something and practice saying it that way.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies to engage in conversations:				
48. Regularly seek out opportunities to talk with native speakers.	☐	☐	☐	☐
49. Initiate conversations in the target language as often as possible.	☐	☐	☐	☐
50. Direct the conversation to familiar topics.	☐	☐	☐	☐
51. Plan out in advance what I want to say.	☐	☐	☐	☐
52. Ask questions as a way to be involved in the conversation.	☐	☐	☐	☐
53. Anticipate what will be said based on what has been said so far.	☐	☐	☐	☐
54. Try topics even when they aren't familiar to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐
55. Encourage others to correct errors in my speaking.	☐	☐	☐	☐
56. Try to figure out and model native speakers' language patterns when requesting, apologizing, or complaining.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies for when I can't think of a word or expression:				
57. Ask for help from my conversational partner.	☐	☐	☐	☐
58. Look for a different way to express the idea, like using a synonym.	☐	☐	☐	☐
59. Use words from my own language, but say it in a way that sounds like words in the target language.	☐	☐	☐	☐
60. Make up new words or guess if I don't know the right ones to use.	☐	☐	☐	☐
61. Use gestures as a way to try and get my meaning across.	☐	☐	☐	☐
62. Switch back to my own language momentarily if I know that the person I'm talking to can understand what is being said.	☐	☐	☐	☐

What other speaking strategies do I use?

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Reading Strategy Use

	I use this strategy and like it	I have tried this strategy and would use it again	I've never used this strategy but am interested in it	This strategy doesn't fit for me
Strategies to improve my reading ability:				
63. Read as much as possible in the target language.	☐	☐	☐	☐
64. Try to find things to read for pleasure in the target language.	☐	☐	☐	☐
65. Find reading material that is at or near my level.	☐	☐	☐	☐
66. Plan out in advance how I'm going to read the text, monitor to see how I'm doing, and then check to see how much I understand.	☐	☐	☐	☐
67. Skim an academic text first to get the main idea and then go back and read it more carefully.	☐	☐	☐	☐
68. Read a story or dialogue several times until I understand it.	☐	☐	☐	☐
69. Pay attention to the organization of the text, especially headings and subheadings.	☐	☐	☐	☐
70. Make ongoing summaries of the reading either in my mind or in the margins of the text.	☐	☐	☐	☐
71. Make predictions as to what will happen next.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies for when words and grammatical structures are not understood:				
72. Guess the approximate meaning by using clues from the context of the reading material.	☐	☐	☐	☐
73. Use a dictionary to get a detailed sense of what individual words mean.	☐	☐	☐	☐

What other reading strategies do I use?

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Writing Strategy Use

	I use this strategy and like it	I have tried this strategy and would use it again	I've never used this strategy but am interested in it	This strategy doesn't fit for me
Strategies for basic writing:				
75. Practice writing the alphabet and/or new words in the target language.	☐	☐	☐	☐
76. Plan out in advance how to write academic papers, monitor how my writing is going, and check to see how well my writing reflects what I want to say.	☐	☐	☐	☐
77. Try writing different kinds of texts in the target language (e.g., personal notes, messages, letters, and course papers).	☐	☐	☐	☐
78. Take class notes in the target language as much as I'm able.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies for writing an essay or academic paper:				
79. Find a different way to express the idea when I don't know the correct expression (e.g., use a synonym or describe the idea).	☐	☐	☐	☐
80. Review what I have already written before continuing to write more.	☐	☐	☐	☐
81. Use reference materials such as a glossary, a dictionary, or a thesaurus to help find or verify words in the target language.	☐	☐	☐	☐
82. Wait to edit my writing until all my ideas are down on paper.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies to use after writing a draft of an essay or paper:				
83. Revise my writing once or twice to improve the language and content.	☐	☐	☐	☐
84. Try to get feedback from others, especially native speakers of the language.	☐	☐	☐	☐

What other writing strategies do I use?

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Translation Strategy Use

	I use this strategy and like it	I have tried this strategy and would use it again	I've never used this strategy but am interested in it	This strategy doesn't fit for me
Strategies for translation:				
85. Plan out what to say or write in my own language and then translate it into the target language.	☐	☐	☐	☐
86. Translate in my head while I am reading to help me understand the text.	☐	☐	☐	☐
87. Translate parts of a conversation into my own language to help me remember the conversation.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategies for working directly in the target language as much as possible:				
88. Put my own language out of mind and think only in the target language as much as possible.	☐	☐	☐	☐
89. Try to understand what has been heard or read without translating it word-for-word into my own language.	☐	☐	☐	☐
90. Use caution when directly transferring words and ideas from my own language into the target language.	☐	☐	☐	☐

What other translation strategies do I use?

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Culture-Learning Strategies Inventory and Index

R. M. Paige, J. Rong, W. Zheng, and B. Kappler

The purpose of this inventory is to find out more about yourself as a culture learner and to help you discover strategies that can help you adapt to cultures that are different from your own. Check the box that describes your use of each listed strategy. The categories are: ***I use this strategy and like it; I have tried this strategy and would use it again; I've never used this strategy but am interested in it***; and ***This strategy doesn't fit for me***.

Pre-Departure Strategies

Strategies for when I am in surroundings that are culturally different from what I am used to:	I use this strategy and like it	I have tried this strategy and would use it again	I've never used this strategy but am interested in it	This strategy doesn't fit for me
1. Consider ways in which different cultures might view things in different ways (e.g., how different cultures value "alone time" or independence).	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Figure out what cultural values might be involved when I encounter a conflict or something goes wrong.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Think about different cross-cultural perspectives to examine situations in which I seem to offend someone or do something wrong.	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Use generalizations instead of stereotypes when I make statements about people who are different from me.	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Counter stereotypes others use about people from my country by using generalizations and cultural values instead.	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Make distinctions between behavior that is personal (unique to the person), cultural (representative of the person's culture), and universal (a shared human concern).	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Look at similarities as well as differences between people of different backgrounds.	☐	☐	☐	☐

What other strategies do I use when I'm in surroundings that are culturally different than what I'm used to?

The next portion of the Culture-Learning Strategies Inventory and Index looks at the culture-learning strategies you think you will use once you are in the country of your study abroad experience, referred to in this inventory as your "host country." If you have studied abroad before, you may want to complete this inventory before you depart for your next study abroad experience. Or you can fill it out by indicating which strategies you think you *will likely* use in a variety of situations.

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In-Country Strategies

Strategies I (will likely) use to adjust to a new culture and cope with culture shock:	I use this strategy and like it	I have tried this strategy and would use it again	I've never used this strategy but am interested in it	This strategy doesn't fit for me
8. Explain my cross-cultural experiences (the good *and* the difficult) to my family and friends at home.	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. Consider what my friends living in the host country say about people from my own culture, using what I know about cultural bias.	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. Strive to keep myself physically healthy.	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. Assume that some moments of "culture shock" are normal culture learning experiences and not worry about them too much.	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. Use a variety of coping strategies when I feel I have "culture shock overload."	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. Keep reasonable expectations of my ability to adjust to the new culture given the amount of time of my stay and my particular study abroad program.	☐	☐	☐	☐

What are other strategies I might use to deal with culture shock?

Strategies for dealing with difficult times in the new culture:				
14. Keep in touch with friends and family back home by writing letters and e-mails.	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. Keep a journal or a diary about my experiences.	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. Participate in sports and other activities while abroad.	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. Find someone from my own culture to talk to about my cultural experiences.	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. Relax when I'm stressed out in my host country by doing what I normally do back home to make myself comfortable.	☐	☐	☐	☐

What are other strategies I might use for dealing with difficult times in the new culture?

Strategies for making judgments about another culture:				
19. Observe the behavior of people from my host country very carefully.	☐	☐	☐	☐
20. Analyze things that happen in my host country that seem strange to me from as many perspectives as I can.	☐	☐	☐	☐
21. Consider my own cultural biases when trying to understand another culture.	☐	☐	☐	☐
22. Refrain from making quick judgments about another culture.	☐	☐	☐	☐

What are other strategies I might use for making cultural judgments?

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	I use this strategy and like it	I have tried this strategy and would use it again	I've never used this strategy but am interested in it	This strategy
Strategies for communicating with people from another culture:				
23. Don't assume that everyone from the same culture is the same.	☐	☐	☐	☐
24. Investigate common areas of miscommunication between people from my host culture and my own culture through books and by talking to other people who know the two cultures well.	☐	☐	☐	☐
25. Read local newspapers to better understand the current political and social issues in my host country.	☐	☐	☐	☐
26. Build relations with local people by finding opportunities to spend time with them.	☐	☐	☐	☐
27. Help people in my host country understand me by explaining my behaviors and attitudes in terms of my personality and culture.	☐	☐	☐	☐

What are other strategies I might use for communicating with people from other cultures?

Strategies to deal with different communication styles:				
28. Consider using different types of communication styles when talking with someone from a different culture.	☐	☐	☐	☐
29. Try a different approach when my communication style doesn't seem to be working well.	☐	☐	☐	☐
30. Listen to whether my conversation partners are indirect or direct in their communication styles.	☐	☐	☐	☐
31. Mirror the communication style of my conversation partners (i.e., if they are always indirect, I try to be indirect too).	☐	☐	☐	☐
32. Respect the way people from other cultures express their emotions.	☐	☐	☐	☐
33. Refrain from disagreeing right away so that I have a chance to listen to what others are trying to communicate.	☐	☐	☐	☐

What are other strategies I might use to deal with different communication styles?

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	I use this strategy and like it	I have tried this strategy and would use it again	I've never used this strategy but am interested in it	This strategy doesn't fit for me
Strategies to understand nonverbal communication in another culture:				
34. Learn about the ways in which people in my host country use nonverbal communication.	☐	☐	☐	☐
35. Examine how my own nonverbal communication is influenced by my culture.	☐	☐	☐	☐
36. Observe which nonverbal communication differences are most difficult for me to adjust to in my host country.	☐	☐	☐	☐
37. Practice using a variety of different nonverbal communication patterns.	☐	☐	☐	☐
38. Figure out how far people stand from each other in my host country and try to keep the "right" distance from others.	☐	☐	☐	☐
39. Observe the gestures that people use in my host country.	☐	☐	☐	☐
40. Ask friends in my host country to explain the meaning of different gestures to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐
41. Try to use eye contact in a way that is appropriate in my host country.	☐	☐	☐	☐

What are other strategies I might use for nonverbal communication?

Strategies to interact with people in the host culture:				
42. Join clubs or organizations of people who have interests like mine.	☐	☐	☐	☐
43. Ask people in my host country about their perceptions of my country and culture.	☐	☐	☐	☐
44. Go to the market in my host country and interact with people in the shops.	☐	☐	☐	☐
45. Hold back on making judgments of other people based on my first impressions.	☐	☐	☐	☐

What are other strategies I might use for interacting with hosts?

Strategies to use with my homestay family:				
46. Find out from my homestay family what I can do to help around the house.	☐	☐	☐	☐
47. Ask my homestay family about smoking rules in the house and observe those rules if I smoke or invite over friends who smoke.	☐	☐	☐	☐
48. Get permission before bringing someone to my homestay family's house.	☐	☐	☐	☐
49. Share pictures of my own family with my homestay family.	☐	☐	☐	☐
50. Teach games common in my own country to my homestay family.	☐	☐	☐	☐
51. Enlist the help of a friend in my host country when I have a conflict with my homestay family to help me understand the situation.	☐	☐	☐	☐
52. Figure out the "rules of the house" for eating, using the bathroom, dressing around the house, and helping out by observing and asking questions.	☐	☐	☐	☐
53. Ask my host family about their views on privacy and being alone rather than assume that we share the same views.	☐	☐	☐	☐

What are other strategies I might use for interacting with homestay families?

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Post-Study-Abroad

Strategies to use when I return home:	I use this strategy and like it	I have tried this strategy and would use it again	I've never used this strategy but am interested in it	This strategy doesn't fit for me
54. Find a group of people who have had similar study abroad experiences to talk to and share experiences.	☐	☐	☐	☐
55. Participate in activities sponsored by study abroad and international groups back home.	☐	☐	☐	☐
56. Take a language class that will help me keep up with the language of the country I studied in (if appropriate) and/or take classes on subjects I became interested in during my study abroad adventure.	☐	☐	☐	☐
57. Volunteer for an international organization or work with international students.	☐	☐	☐	☐
58. Share my feelings and experiences with friends and family, without expecting that they will relate to all that I say.	☐	☐	☐	☐
59. Try to keep connected with friends I made while studying abroad.	☐	☐	☐	☐
60. Give myself time to readjust to my own country.	☐	☐	☐	☐

What are other strategies I might use when I return home?

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You as a Culturally Diverse Person

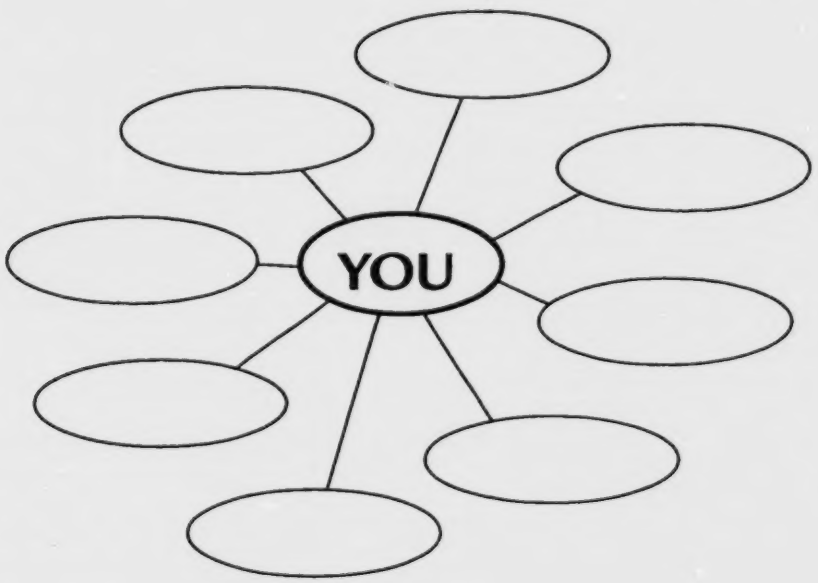
Most of us are not aware we have a culture until we step outside of it.
~ Jacob Dick, Italy

You are embarking on study abroad to meet real people from other countries. You'll want to learn as much as you can about them – their cultural background, their personality, their likes and dislikes. In exchange, they'll want to know about you. This next activity helps you reflect upon the cultural groups and categories to which you belong. All of our experiences growing up have contributed to who we are today, particularly in terms of what we value, what we believe, what we know, and how we behave.

Discovering your cultural diversity

Take a few minutes to complete this diagram. In as many circles as you can, write a word you feel describes you or is a significant part of who you are or how you choose to identify yourself to others (e.g., sister, student, African-American, Christian, Democrat).

Diagram of the Culturally Diverse You



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Reflection questions:

- If you had to pick just one circle, which would it be? Two circles? Why are these the most important parts of your cultural identity?

- Did you have difficulty filling in eight circles? Did you find eight was not enough? What insights have you gained about yourself from this exercise? Is there an identity that others don't readily recognize in you? Is this OK? Or is it frustrating?

- Go back to the diagram and add some of the values you attribute to the circles. For example, values from being a student might be "independence," "respect for knowledge," or "question authority." Are there places where the values conflict?

- How might these circles change when you are abroad? For example, did you list your nationality in one of the circles? Your social class? Did you list the languages you speak? How might it feel to be seen as just one or another circle – such as U.S. American?

- How might the roles you play in the U.S. be similar and different in your host country?

(Adapted from Gardenswartz and Rowe, 1994.)

Although you know the many cultures that you belong to, others you meet will not automatically know this about you. One challenge about studying abroad is that you may feel as if you are only seen as a U.S. American, rich, or a female, etc. Similarly, it is important to realize that all people are complex and have multiple layers of identity so that you don't fall into the trap of limiting them to one identity – just as you don't think of yourself as being just U.S. American. One strategy is to try to learn at least eight aspects of your host's identities.

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Becoming Familiar with Culture: The Iceberg Analogy

Culture shock in Sydney didn't hit me when the meat tasted slimy or even when every other sentence was 'no worries mate.' It hit when I went to register for classes and spent an entire day trying not to rip out all of my hair due to the process that was so slow it was painful. I took registration on the Internet for granted. No longer will I do that. ~ Elizabeth Hook, Australia

My first bit of advice would be patience. You are no longer in the land of instant gratification. France, for the foreigner, is an acquired taste. ~ Joy Wiltermuth, France

You know there will be differences and similarities. But how do you recognize and understand these when you are face-to-face with these similarities and differences?

During the third week of my 15-week stay in Venezuela, it became time to iron some of my clothes. Upon doing so, the iron fell off the ironing board and onto the tile floor. The piece designed to make the iron stand up had broken off, so I decided I had better tell my host mother what had happened. It wasn't easy, but with body language, showing her the iron, and my beginning-level Spanish, she understood what I had done. I could not help but notice she looked somewhat agitated and concerned. She fidgeted around with the iron for awhile and left the room and went about her business. I, thinking it was not a big deal, went to class and forgot about the incident.

However, the next day I woke up to an empty house and a note addressed to me lying on the kitchen table. After an hour of using my Spanish-English dictionary, I figured out what it said. My mother, using many kind and genial words, was asking me to go into town to buy the super glue that would repair the broken iron. This involved a great deal of uncertainty for me. In the beginning, I hated going anywhere in the city alone, so I called every person I knew and either nobody was home or they could not go with me. Not wanting to disappoint my host mom, I set out alone to find the glue.

On the note were the directions to get to the carpenter's shop, so basically I knew where I was going. I needed to take the bus because it was too far to walk, and besides, I had been avoiding the bus as much as possible; therefore, I felt it necessary to overcome my fear. However, as soon as I stepped onto the bus I knew I was going to have a problem because I got pushed to the back of the bus, which meant I was going to have to shout 'Por la parada, por favor' at the top of my lungs to get off the bus. It is one thing to speak in Spanish, but it is an entirely different thing to shout in Spanish. ~ Joshua Bleskan, Venezuela

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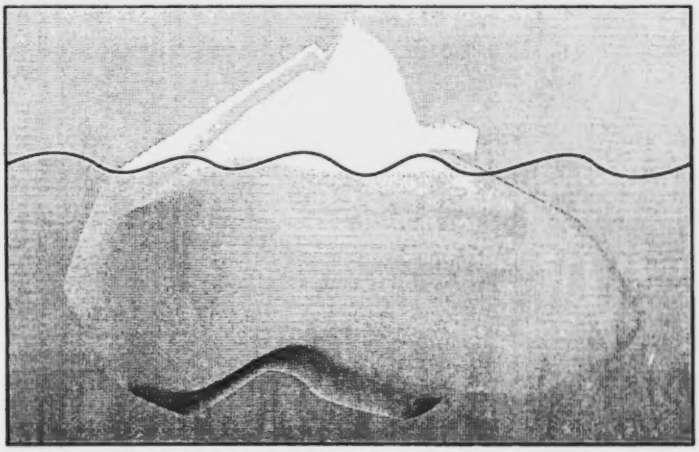
Joshua and the iceberg

Joshua faces a number of challenges in this situation. To help sort through these, the analogy of an iceberg is helpful. The tip of the iceberg represents the pieces of culture that we can see. The area below the water line represents deeper cultural meaning.

1. What do you see happening in Joshua's example? Place these items on the iceberg above the line.
2. What might be some deeper cultural differences that lie below the surface? Place these items on the iceberg as well.



Other students who have looked at this incident have placed the following items above the line on the iceberg as the observable elements of culture:

- *Language* – his host is using Spanish, his Spanish is limited
- *Indirect communication* – his host did not directly discuss the incident with him
- *Formal and polite communication* – his host's note
- *Yelling on the bus* – people in the back yell to get off the bus

The tricky part is, of course, what lies beneath the surface. Notice that the portion of the iceberg beneath the water is much greater. The portion that is *invisible* includes peoples' values, norms, and belief systems. Here's a look at what other students have said were some of the deeper cultural differences Joshua encountered:

- His own culture's emphasis on independence and individualism.
- His assumption that nothing being said on the day of the accident meant that nothing was wrong. The absence of words can mean no conflict or no problem.
- His host country's rules of behavior in public places.

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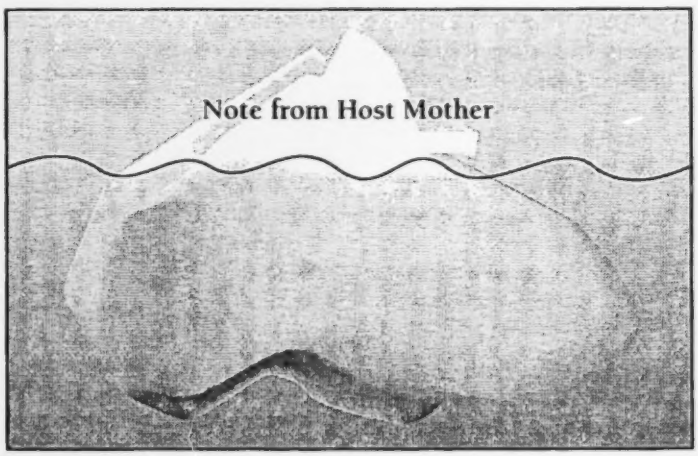
Here's a bit of an explanation of these differences:

- Joshua's culture emphasizes independence. His language inadequacy and unfamiliarity with public transportation made him feel uneasy and dependent on others. He experienced frustration that he felt dependent on his friends, but finding none available, he was determined to go out on his own and find the glue. Joshua experienced a desire to be independent, a strong U.S. American value. In this sense, Joshua's clash with cultures was not directly with Venezuela, but with himself. In the end, it is also the value that helped him through the situation.
- When the host mother did not immediately tell Joshua that he needed to fix the iron, he assumed it was not a big deal. But as Joshua himself later realized, the iron needed to be fixed. The note was not just a way to communicate but potentially a sign of a preferred way to communicate because it's a way to save face.
- To Joshua, yelling in public places may be considered very inappropriate. But in Venezuela it was apparently OK in one public place – a crowded bus – so he experienced a different norm for behavior in a public place.
- Joshua's willingness to step outside of his comfort zone and understand the elements underneath the iceberg helped him be successful in this situation. In addition, he and his host mom had something in common. They both held the belief that people are responsible for their own actions.

Why do you think Joshua's host mother wrote the note? Write your responses below the line of the iceberg.



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Here is what people who have been to Venezuela had to say about the note:

- *'Perhaps she is being sensitive to his limited language skills, and so she wrote a note to help him.'*
- *'This may not have much to do with culture, but more to do with social class – this may be an issue of money and income. This family may not have the money to fix or replace the item, so it is important that Joshua take care of it.'*
- *'There may be a value difference here. The perception of Venezuelans may be that U.S. Americans are wasteful. Perhaps she has had U.S. American students in the past, and when incidents like this have occurred they have bought new things instead of having them fixed. She may be trying to teach him that it's OK to fix the iron instead of replacing it.'*
- *'For Venezuelans and his host mom it may be more appropriate to give messages indirectly, especially when you are at the beginning of a relationship. It is a way to save face and not embarrass Joshua.'*
- *'As a Venezuelan, I can see that the note is written not necessarily to avoid conflict, but to emphasize that in taking care of things you are taking care of your relationships with other people, and that is the most important thing. He needs to fix the iron not because it's an iron, but because it will show that he cares for her.'*

Here's what Joshua had to say about this:

Because of the success I had with the iron incident, my host mother gained a lot of confidence in me and we became the best of friends. So when I shattered the sink during my 10th week, there was no longer a need to write me a note to fix it. She told me that she would pay for half if I paid for the other half. Now, had I not done what at the time seemed like a rather insignificant thing – go to the store and buy some glue – breaking the sink could have been a very uncomfortable situation. Fortunately, I did what I was politely asked, and it benefited me greatly in the future. For this reason, I believe there is nothing more detrimental in cultural adaptation than avoiding the uncomfortable. What is the worst that can happen? More times than not, the worst that can happen comes from the avoidance.

The iceberg analogy has some key points for learning about a culture:

- The things we observe almost always have deeper meaning, that is, they represent a more fundamental cultural value. Although the iceberg separates culture into visible and invisible elements, these are almost always interrelated (such as the written note being a sign of a deeper communication pattern in the culture).
- What we think we see is not always what is going on. Even trickier is how a visible aspect of culture, something so seemingly obvious such as laughing, can have very different meanings in different cultures. For example, laughing can mean "that's funny" or "I'm embarrassed."
- We interpret what we see in the host culture as we would in our own, but the actual meaning may be quite different.

I like this iceberg strategy. It's an easy-to-use mental image. ~ Jacob Dick, Italy

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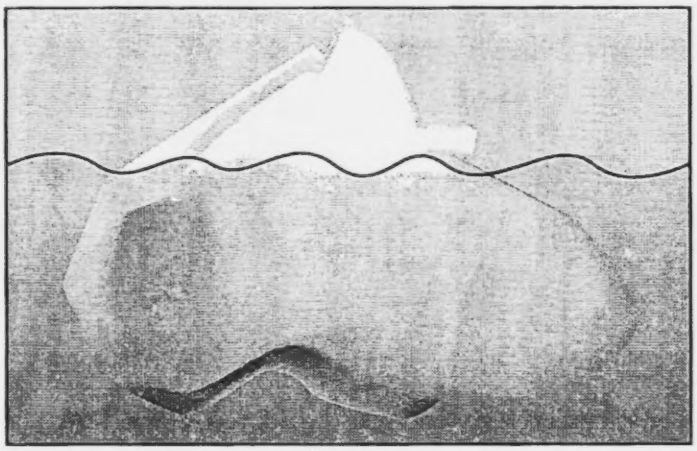
Identifying aspects of culture

What are the kinds of things that typically lie above or below the surface? Take a look at these sample items and place them on the iceberg – the more visible elements going above the waterline and the less visible below.

____ clothing	____ methods of worship	____ rules of politeness
____ views on equality	____ time management	____ relationship with nature
____ religious beliefs	____ tipping customs	____ attitudes toward sexuality
____ personal distance	____ gestures	____ degree of eye contact
____ works of art	____ concept of beauty	____ food



Reflection questions:

- Did you place some items both above and below? If so, why?

- Were some items difficult to place?

- Where did you place methods of worship? If you don't have any visible signs of worship (like going to a public place of worship), what does that mean? How would someone come to learn about your own religious beliefs?

- Most would place "views on equality" in the deep aspects of culture. What might be visible signs that you are a feminist or support gender equality among men and women? Are there signs in the way you dress? Speak? What visible signs are there about equity among social classes?

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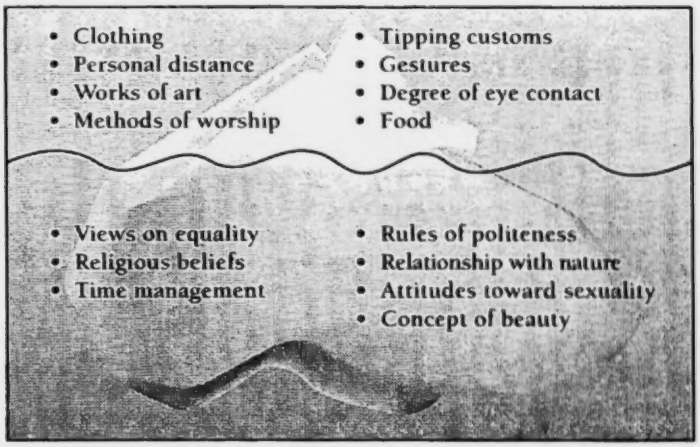
Suggested answers:



Examining the connections between surface and deep aspects of culture is a critical strategy for being effective in crossing cultures. For example, certain gestures may be signs of religious beliefs such as some Muslim women not shaking hands with men when they greet each other. And, in the case with Joshua, understanding the note as a way to maintain the relationship and a preference for indirect communication was critical to Joshua's success with his host. Of course, some visible signs may not be connected to a deeper meaning – it may just be the way things are!

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Basic Things You Should Know Before You Go

It's strategic to have some basic facts about your host country at your fingertips. This helps you to get into conversations and shows your respect for the culture. Take some time to investigate the following topics – use the Internet, foreign newspapers, and magazines or ask a person from your host country.

- Names of political leaders
- Names of political parties
- Major religion(s)/spiritual beliefs and their effect on the host country
- Hot topics of the day (e.g., government scandals)
- Recent conflicts and the role of the U.S. in those conflicts
- Type of government
- Year of independence and circumstances
- Economic conditions
- Cultural diversity (immigration and refugee populations, etc.)
- Class structure (e.g., what will your status as a student be in this country? What percentage of students in your host country go to college?)
- U.S. role in local economy, politics, culture, etc.
- Types of gifts, if any, that will be appropriate to bring to host families, new friends, etc.

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Differentiating Stereotypes and Generalizations

This exercise gives you some practice in differentiating between stereotypes and generalizations. Read each statement below and decide whether you think it is a stereotype or generalization.

S = Stereotype
G = Generalization

1. _____ "Many Latinos cherish their family life, so it's not surprising that Rosa still lives at home."
2. _____ "The Japanese are xenophobic, which is understandable because they live on an island country, separate from other countries."
3. _____ "It figures that Boris likes to go out drinking, since alcoholism is widespread in Russia."
4. _____ "I don't understand how Huang could do so poorly on the tests. Asians are supposed to be good at math."
5. _____ "The French have a deep respect for their language and culture, and they usually prefer that foreigners speak in French when they visit."
6. _____ "In Italy, when a man approaches a women, he's only interested in one thing."
7. _____ "In Japan, the man typically is the breadwinner of the family, and he will often value the company he works for more than his family life."
8. _____ "America is a violent country. Everyone carries a gun."
9. _____ "I can't imagine that Jenny comes from Sweden since she doesn't have light-colored hair and blue eyes."
10. _____ "Germans tend to be very concerned about environmental issues and recycling."

Now check the suggested answers below. While you are reviewing the answers, think about what made some of these generalizations rather than stereotypes. What you see in the generalizations, of course, is the use of qualifying words such as *tend to*, *usually*, *typically*, and *often*. They are not as emphatic and do not imply that everyone in the culture has a certain characteristic.

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Suggested answers

1. Generalization (discussed in terms of "many")
2. Stereotype (refers to all Japanese)
3. Stereotype (assuming that alcoholism applies to every person)
4. Stereotype (assuming that good math skills apply to every person)
5. Generalization (discussed in terms of a preference)
6. Stereotype (assuming that every Italian man has a sexual motive)
7. Generalization (discussed in terms of "typically")
8. Stereotype (assuming that every person reacts the same way)
9. Stereotype (assuming that everyone in Sweden looks exactly the same)
10. Generalization (discussed in terms of tendencies)

Additional strategies for making generalizations

You need to take time to explain your generalized statements so that the listener can best understand your point of view. Your desire to learn more about the culture will sound much more authentic if you resist the temptation to exaggerate and stereotype. For example, instead of saying, "Women sure are second class citizens in Japan," you might say, "It doesn't seem that women are treated equally to men in employment; for example, women are often required to make tea because of their gender." Note that the statement includes the observable behavior that led you to the generalization. The extra detail in the generalized statement makes it preferable to the stereotyped statement. You haven't concluded anything yet, but a pattern seems to be emerging from the information you are getting about the country. It also allows your listener to see what the generalization is based on and can lead to further discussion about whether your assumption is accurate or not.

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Predominant U.S. American Cultural Patterns

"Hey, how's it going?"

The language we speak reveals much about our cultural values and belief systems by offering us clues into our own and other cultures. In your study of the new language, you may have instinctively picked up the subtle nuances of your host culture. But how much have you thought about the language that you speak here, in the U.S.? Often idiomatic phrases, sayings, and proverbs that we have heard since we were small children reveal much about us and U.S. American culture.

Interpreting culture through popular sayings

Take a look at the popular sayings listed below. What might they suggest about U.S. American values and beliefs? Write your answer next to the statement on the right.

Popular Saying or Expression	What value(s) is being emphasized?
1. "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again."	
2. "Make lemons into lemonade."	
3. "Make yourself at home."	
4. "Don't blame me!"	
5. "The squeaky wheel gets the grease."	
6. "Where there's a will there's a way."	
7. "Talk is cheap."	
8. "It's no big deal."	
9. "What's the bottom line?"	
10. "What's up?"	

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Suggested answers

Popular Saying or Expression	What value(s) is being emphasized?
1. "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again."	*Productivity, stick-to-it approach.*
2. "Make lemons into lemonade."	*Staying positive is important. You are responsible for making the best out of a negative situation. Similar saying is "Look for the silver lining."*
3. "Make yourself at home."	*Informality, equality. Note that many internationals comment that when they hear this phrase, they don't really know what it means or how they should act.*
4. "Don't blame me!"	*While we may emphasize individual responsibility, we are also skilled at finding another source of the problem and are able to articulate "why it's not me!"*
5. "The squeaky wheel gets the grease."	*It's good to complain and to point out problems. This helps to improve the world we live in and the products we use. Improvement and change are often highly valued. At a personal level, it means that the one who complains will get attention and help and if you are quiet and accommodating, you won't get helped.*
6. "Where there's a will there's a way."	*Persistence is important. Individuals can accomplish enormous feats, if they are willing to work hard.*
7. "Talk is cheap."	*What's important is action. Another saying related to this one is "we could sit around and talk about this all day," which is a negative way to say "let's get moving!"*
8. "It's no big deal."	*Emphasis on downplaying problems and avoiding conflict. This varies greatly by region in the U.S.*
9. "What's the bottom line?"	*Focus on results and most often on money.*
10. "What's up?"	*Informality. Also the importance of recognizing people as you see them or "run into them."*

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International Perspectives on U.S. Americans

Another way to learn about our own culture is to study how others view us. Before you go, however, it is helpful to become more aware of how non-Americans generally view Americans.

In the previous activity, in order to begin exploring U.S. American culture, you were asked to identify values associated with popular sayings and expressions. Another way to get a glimpse of U.S. values and cultures is to see what internationals have to say about their experiences in the U.S. We asked some international students to comment on their first impressions of life in the U.S. This will give you a sense of what "outsiders" notice about life in the U.S. and how they may view you, knowing you are a U.S. American.

Uzbekistan

My fellow Uzbek friends say that Americans are 'freedom-lovers,' 'free to express themselves,' and 'open-minded.' To that I can add that Americans adore their country and are real patriots of their native land. They do not know limits. For example, a 46-year-old can decide to go to college to get a bachelor's degree. They also love money and spend most of their time earning and saving. At the same time, they like recreational activities a lot, ... such as sports, travel, etc. Also, they are into the 'political correctness' thing a lot. Americans are very 'environmentally conscious,' meaning they care about the environment and ecology a lot and enforce environmentally friendly practices such as reuse/recycle.

Japan

Americans have high self-esteem and respect others' individuality.

One of the things that I found interesting or odd about U.S. Americans after I came to the United States is that they seem to be busy all the time and proud to tell people how busy they are. I sometimes felt as if they were implying that they were too busy with other things to be bothered with me. They seem to be very friendly and easy-going, but you have to make an appointment for whatever you do with them, even going out for coffee with friends sometimes. Otherwise, people would leave you saying, 'I gotta go.' It took awhile for me to get used to it.

Kyrgyzstan

Many people from former Soviet Union countries would say, 'People in the USA are very friendly, but they hardly be real friends' or 'Americans are very busy people and hardly have time for socialization with each other.'

Mongolia

I have very positive thoughts about U.S. Americans. First of all, they are very friendly. Even if they are in a bad mood, they do their best to be friendly. Second, I think U.S. Americans are very good communicators. Talking with others and sharing information all the time seems to be important for them; however, they are forgetful. They ask you a question and you give them the answer, but when you see them again, they ask you the same question

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again. Third, Americans are very good at timing and planning things ahead of time. I have always been so amazed at how they plan events and activities of all types including their work and vacations. Once they plan to do something they do it no matter what. Moreover, they are good at meeting deadlines and doing things on time.

Iceland

Of all the things I thought of Americans before I came, two issues have remained as still true. They are incredibly loud and take up a lot of space in public places. The sound level at an American restaurant is as high as a cliff full of birds in my country of Iceland. It is hard to pass Americans on the sidewalk because they usually take up half the space themselves just by the way they walk and swing their arms. Every time I go home to Iceland, I'm stopped by someone who tells me I'm taking up too much space on the sidewalk!

Hong Kong

I have noticed the following differences in friendship:

- *Americans talk about politics and sports with their friends whereas we talk with our friends about deeper subject matters such as ideas, beliefs, and our goals in life.*
- *There is a deeper commitment among friends in my culture. I can expect my friends to be there for me even when we are far apart or vice versa.*

Korea

Americans are individual-oriented. Each individual's opinion, perspective, and way of living are considered to be unique in the society. Americans are polite to strangers in general; however, that politeness is often superficial. In other words, they act politely for the sake of politeness (meaning that they act politely not necessarily because they respect others but because they know that they ought to be polite). Americans love food...lots of food. They love eating out. Restaurants are serving more than enough food to the customers and wasting more than what is needed to feed the starved people in extremely poor countries.

Germany

Americans are very patriotic, almost nationalistic. Americans are convinced that theirs is the best country and that other nations need to learn and absorb the American belief system. There is little if any introspection and reflection of what can be learned from others. Even though the U.S. stands for freedom of speech, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, its core values continue to reflect the white, male, Christian thinking of the Founding Fathers.

For reflection and discussion:

- Were you surprised at any of the comments?

- Many of us grew up with adults trying to teach us the golden rule (Do unto others as you would have them do unto you). While this works pretty well with people from the same cultural group, it does not necessarily work well in crossing cultures. Instead, consider the Platinum Rule in which you "do unto others as they themselves would have done unto them." (M. Bennett, 1999, p. 213). How might you go about discovering how people in your host culture would like to be treated?

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The Values Chart – How I Rate Myself

In the previous exercises, you were asked to come up with values underlying U.S. popular sayings and to compare and contrast possible U.S. values with those of your host country. Now you will have a chance to focus on who you are in terms of your own values. Since little about humans can be thought of as either/or choices, we have placed each of these values on a continuum. While chances are you are relatively high in one contrasting value and low in another, you may be high in both, even if they are frequently viewed as opposites. Read each description of these values, think about the continuums, and then fill in the circle where you feel you rank in regard to these various values and beliefs.

The Individual
While you may seek input from others, you are ultimately responsible for your own decisions regarding where you live, what your major is, and where you decide to study abroad. You have a sense of pride in being responsible for yourself and know that others expect you to be independent.

The Group
You believe the primary group is the smallest unit of survival. Looking out for others protects one's self. Group harmony is the greatest good. Children are taught to depend on others, who in turn can always depend on them. Identity is a function of one's membership or role in a primary group.

	Low ←						→ High
The Individual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Group	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Equality
You believe you have a great deal to contribute to your own education and enjoy courses in which there are discussions and independent projects. You prefer to be on a first-name basis with your instructors, boss, and co-workers.

Hierarchy
You believe that instructors are the experts and, given their status, should be referred to by their titles. You prefer course assignments in which you demonstrate through exams or papers that you understand the material the instructor presented.

	Low ←						→ High
Equality	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hierarchy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Time is flexible
You feel that following a clock is artificial. Promising to meet someone at a certain time is not a commitment set in stone. Rather, appointments and social gatherings happen when the time is right.

Time is tangible
You take great care to plan your day to make sure you arrive to class, work, and meetings with friends and family on time.

	Low ←						→ High
Time is flexible	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Time is tangible	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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Meritocracy
You believe that it is important to get things done by yourself and that what is fair for one is fair for all. You know that when you graduate, the jobs you get will be because you have earned them.

Associations
You believe that while what you accomplish on your own is important, you know that it's "who you know" in your life that will make the biggest impact in where you attend school and what jobs you get after graduation.

	Low ←						→ High
Meritocracy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Associations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Activity
Your day is scheduled with a number of activities including work, studying, and social time with friends. When planning to get together with family and friends, you focus on an activity, like playing a sport or going to a movie.

People
Who you are with is more important than what you are doing. Rather than schedule specific activities, you are most likely just to hang out with your friends and family.

	Low ←						→ High
Activity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Change
You know that almost everything around you will change – even the friends you have throughout your lifetime. You look forward to change and view that it brings many positives to your life. You may change something just for the sake of change.

Tradition
You feel it's important to keep traditions in the world around you because these bring a positive and expected rhythm to your life. The friends that you have had since you were very small will be the most important friends you have throughout your entire life.

	Low ←						→ High
Change	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tradition	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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For consideration:

Now that you have filled out the values chart for yourself, take some time to reflect upon your responses. If possible, get together with another student going abroad to share and discuss your responses.

- Do you have any marks on the far ends (either the highest or lowest circle) of the value continuums? If so, that means you have a strong value orientation in those particular areas. Think about how this might be a source of strength for you. But also consider how your values can be a challenge in the host culture.
- Were there certain values where you felt strongly about both sides of the continuum? Sometimes, the situations we are in require us to behave in different ways, for example, being very focused on activities at times but focused on people at others. How might this be a source of strength for you in the host culture?
- Try to discuss your answers with another study abroad student and then consider these questions:
  - How did your answers compare?
  - What were the similarities and what were the differences?
  - Can you pinpoint aspects of your backgrounds and personal histories that may have influenced your system of values and beliefs?
  - Ask each other where you think the average U.S. American would be on these value dimensions and then look at how close you are to the average.

To compare further, find someone who is from the host country or has spent a lot of time there. Discuss the values chart together and plot out the "average person" from that country. Where do the main similarities and differences lie for the two countries? Where do the main similarities and differences lie for you, in particular, and the host country?

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Homestay Expectations

What are my expectations for the homestay? What do I hope to gain from my homestay? (Rank from 1 to 5)

____ Get support in adjusting to the culture
____ Improve my language skills
____ Participate in family life and learn the culture
____ Make new friends
____ Other:_____

What will be my responsibilities as part of the homestay? Although this will vary, typically you will be expected to engage in the activities of the family and to abide by the rules of the household. This could include respecting any curfews and family chores that may be expected of you. A few questions that you might ask yourself are:

- Is the homestay smoking or non-smoking?
- Am I prepared to adjust my diet to accommodate the homestay family?
- Will I be expected to help take care of small children in the family?
- How will my gender affect my host family's expectations of me?
- How will my family's social status affect me?
- Will I be expected to pay for things I took for granted at home (such as telephone bills, groceries, etc.)?
- Will I be encouraged to treat any household staff with respect and distance?

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Statements of Adjustment

The goal of this activity is to give you the chance to think about adjustment and how you would react or help someone going through the process.

José and Steven are both juniors in college from the United States who meet in the same chemistry class while studying at a foreign university. Their class is taught in the host country's language, and because they are both unfamiliar with the difficult science vocabulary, they begin meeting at a local coffee shop to study together and help each other understand the material. One evening, they find themselves in the midst of several tables of students, all speaking English. As the night winds down, they become immersed in a conversation with six other students around them, all of whom are from the United States. Although everyone is attending the local university, they did not all arrive in the host country at the same time. The amount of time in the host country for each of them falls between one and seven months.

Read the following statements and try to determine how long you think each student has been in the host country and how well you think that student is satisfied with their experience in the host country. Place your answer on the graph below, indicating where you think each student falls.

Kiersten:	The people here are so wonderful. I'm having a great time!
José:	They always take so long to complete something that could be accomplished much quicker. It's not very efficient.
Steven:	Some days I'm frustrated with my language skills, but then I'll have a conversation where I understand everything and I can see how far I've come.
Kurt:	I love it here. I can't imagine being anywhere else!
Amira:	It doesn't bother me anymore when people stare. I would be curious about the strange-looking foreigner too if I were them.
Maggie:	I can't believe I'm eating raw fish. I couldn't stomach it when I first arrived.
Gretchen:	I can barely stand the smell of the cafeteria. Give me McDonald's any day.
Martin:	I feel like when I return to the U.S. a part of me will remain here in this country.

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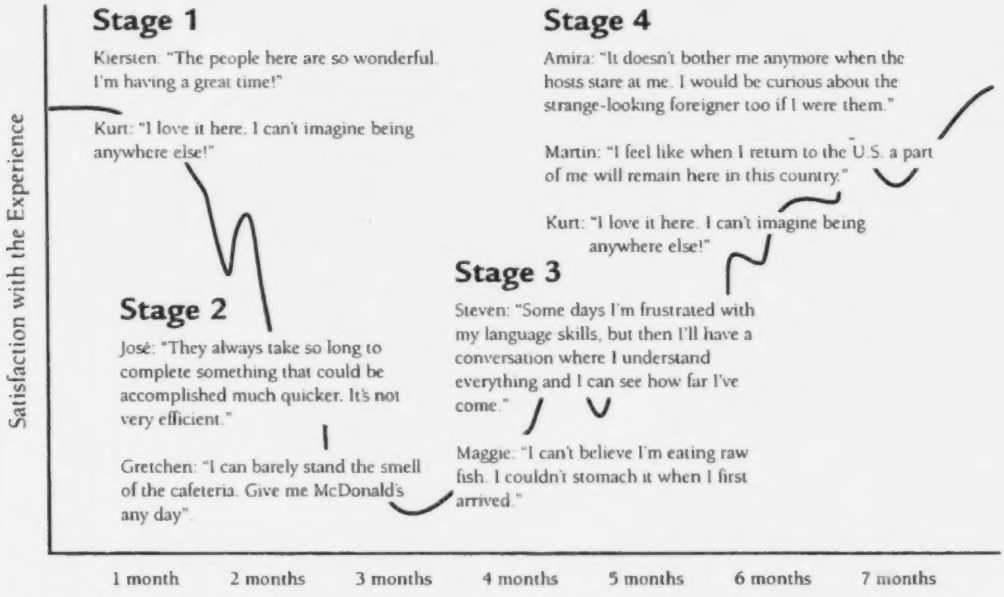
Stage 1
Kiersten: "The people here are so wonderful. I'm having a great time!"
Kurt: "I love it here. I can't imagine being anywhere else!"
Stage 2
José: "They always take so long to complete something that could be accomplished much quicker. It's not very efficient."
Gretchen: "I can barely stand the smell of the cafeteria. Give me McDonald's any day".
Stage 3
Steven: "Some days I'm frustrated with my language skills, but then I'll have a conversation where I understand everything and I can see how far I've come."
Maggie: "I can't believe I'm eating raw fish. I couldn't stomach it when I first arrived."
Stage 4
Amira: "It doesn't bother me anymore when the hosts stare at me. I would be curious about the strange-looking foreigner too if I were them."
Martin: "I feel like when I return to the U.S. a part of me will remain here in this country."
Kurt: "I love it here. I can't imagine being anywhere else!"
Satisfaction with the Experience
1 month
2 months
3 months
4 months
5 months
6 months
7 months

Reflection questions:

- Why is Kurt's comment listed in both stages 1 and 4? (Hint…This was not a mistake; we feel that while overly positive comments are common in stage 1, they can also reflect a deep connection to the culture that is found in stage 4.)
- What advice or reaction would you have to each of the students' comments?
- What does your "U-Curve" look like if your study abroad is two months? One year?
- How has your own emotional experience changed since arrival?

Knowing these eight characters' timelines can be very helpful in understanding how your own experience will change over time and how to recognize when you may be experiencing challenges in cultural adjustment.

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Coping Scenarios

A study abroad experience can be the highlight of an academic career. It's an adventure that is anticipated, sometimes for years in advance; a journey we expect will contain few or none of the commonplace problems of day-to-day living in the U.S. It's hard to imagine having normal concerns such as turning a paper in on time or arguing with your roommates about whose turn it is to take out the garbage. Instead you are envisioning yourself walking along the Great Wall of China or witnessing an active volcano on a remote Indonesian island. When planning a study abroad trip, it's easy to envision an experience free from the bureaucracy and small troubles of "ordinary" life.

But just as life in the United States can be occasionally complex and unpleasant, a study abroad experience will contain its fair share of problems and complex issues, some of them unique to the culture where you are studying.

Read the following scenarios from two study abroad students:

Scenario 1

Kerry is a 21-year-old student from the U.S. studying in Slovenia. In mid-November of her year abroad she begins dating Gregor, a fellow student at the university and a native of Hungary. Since she is not going back to the U.S. for winter break, he invites her over to his family's house in Budapest to celebrate the New Year. This would be a large family event and would involve meeting his entire family, including his grandparents, cousins, nieces, and nephews, and spending two days with them. Although she likes Gregor and would enjoy visiting Budapest, she feels anxious that this kind of visit would indicate to his family that she and Gregor are in a more serious relationship than they actually are.

If you were Kerry's friend, what advice would you give her?

Here's some advice other students had for Kerry:

- *Tell Gregor that for you this indicates that the relationship is pretty serious. Ask if he thinks it means the same thing.*
- *Ask Gregor if there is a cultural meaning to this kind of family visit. Explain that you want to know what this may mean to the family and to Gregor before you go.*
- *If you feel funny making a big deal about this with Gregor, get advice from another friend who really knows the culture.*
- *Don't worry so much. Enjoy the experience and don't worry about what Gregor's family thinks. You are only there for a short time and you don't know what the future will bring. Even if there are cultural differences, you cannot control what the family will think.*
- *Ask Gregor what the sleeping arrangements will be. You don't want to be embarrassed in front of the whole family – either way! And you need to know that you'll be comfortable there.*

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Scenario 2

Terry is 22 and studying in Bern, Switzerland. Terry is a seasoned traveler and an avid outdoorsman. Part of the reason he chose to study in Switzerland is because he would be centrally located to take long weekend and holiday trips to France, Germany, Italy, and Austria. After his second trip away from Bern, however, his host mother takes him aside and asks him if he is planning on being gone every weekend. She tells him that other host students they have had in the past spent more time with the family and indicates that she would like it if he became more involved with the family. Terry feels torn – he likes his host family well enough, but he already has plans to leave again in two weeks to go hiking and camping with a friend who is studying in Munich. Additionally, there are a number of other trips he'd like to make before his year abroad is over.

If you were Terry's friend, what advice would you give him?

Here's some advice other students had for Terry:

- *You need to think carefully – maybe the host family option is not for you.*
- *Try to plan for the long run. Is it more important to see a great deal of Europe or to form a relationship with the family? Can you maybe come back again to visit friends?*
- *You need to recognize that you cannot have it both ways. You have to decide which is more important – travel or the family.*
- *Will you really get to know Bern and the Swiss if you are spending so much time traveling?*
- *You are only there for a short time. Perhaps you can negotiate with your family and explain that you would like to spend time with them. Be prepared that they may not feel comfortable with you 'scheduling them in' on the weekends you are available. Maybe ask them what would work well. What's the 'ideal' time to be with them? Maybe you could adjust your schedule and spend more time with them during the week in the evenings, for example.*

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Differentiating the Phases of Cultural Awareness

For the following statements, try to determine which phase the traveler is in. Suggested answers are found on the next page.

Chris: *I'm exhausted after I get home everyday. It seems I never can do anything right.*
Phase _____

Elena: *I'm feeling very comfortable in the culture. It's become a second home for me.*
Phase _____

Karenna: *It surprised me to realize that I could have an entire conversation on the phone without getting stressed out.*
Phase _____

Shane: *I notice that the hosts do funny things when they greet one another.*
Phase _____

Ingrid: *It sometimes embarrasses me when other foreigners complain about the culture and act inappropriately. I often feel like I don't want to be associated with them.*
Phase _____

Max: *I feel like the host nationals are watching me all the time. I'm afraid of making mistakes.*
Phase _____

Lia: *Now that I can eat almost anything using chopsticks, it really makes sense to use them as much as the nationals do.*
Phase _____

Jess: *As long as you can speak the language, there will be few problems in navigating the culture.*
Phase _____

Allie: *I am able to learn so much by being able to interact with hosts on their level. I can often understand what they are going to say before they actually say it.*
Phase _____

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Differentiating the phases of cultural awareness answers

Chris: *I'm exhausted after I get home everyday. It seems I never can do anything right.*
Phase II: traveler is very aware of own cultural inadequacy.

Elena: *I'm feeling very comfortable in the culture. It's become a second home for me.*
Phase IV: but also could be Phase I if traveler has no recognition of cultural differences.

Karenna: *It surprised me to I realize that I could have an entire conversation on the phone without getting stressed out.*
Phase III: could be Phase IV, but the traveler wouldn't be surprised at own competence.

Shane: *I notice that the hosts do funny things when they greet one another.*
Phase I: the traveler finds host behavior unusual, oblivious to own behavior.

Ingrid: *It sometimes embarrasses me when other foreigners complain about the culture and act inappropriately. I often feel like I don't want to be associated with them.*
Phase IV: it can require a lot of patience for a culturally aware traveler to be around those of significantly lower cultural competence.

Max: *I feel like the host nationals are watching me all the time. I'm afraid of making mistakes.*
Phase II: traveler expresses more than usual self-consciousness at own ineffective behavior.

Lia: *Now that I can eat almost anything using chopsticks it really makes sense to use them as much as the nationals do.*
Phase III: traveler is expressing awareness of own competence development.

Jess: *As long as you can speak the language there will be few problems in navigating the culture.*
Phase I: traveler attributes all cultural differences to language alone.

Allie: *I am able to learn so much by being able to interact with hosts on their level. I can often understand what they are going to say before they actually say it.*
Phase IV: traveler expresses a high level of intuitive cultural empathy and sensitivity.

Take a moment and consider which stage describes where you are at today. Which character can you most easily relate to?

As the above exercise demonstrates, where you are in your ability to understand and manage cultural differences is going to have a direct effect on your ability to adjust to the culture and achieve your academic and personal goals. The next section will help you build on these skills by providing ways for you to make sense of the plethora of cultural phenomena you encounter in the host culture.

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Low- and High-Context Communication

If you are coming from the U.S., chances are you are either a low-context communicator or you are very familiar with this environment. Knowing how to distinguish between high- and low-context messages can therefore help you learn how to "read between the lines" – a skill of high-context communicators. This exercise will help you become more familiar with the differences in low- and high-context communication. For the following ten statements, decide whether the communication is direct/low context or indirect/high context.

L = direct or low context
H = indirect or high context

____ 1. People have a hard time saying no.
____ 2. Paying attention to the status of the communicator is as important as the message itself.
____ 3. The message is more important than the status of who communicated it.
____ 4. Business is conducted only after enough time is taken for talking about family, your health, important politics, etc.
____ 5. People get down to business right away and often omit any "small" talk.
____ 6. It is alright to say "I disagree" to your professor in class.
____ 7. Use of intermediaries or go-betweens is common.
____ 8. "I don't understand" is often used to voice disagreement.
____ 9. If you want something, it's best to come out and ask for it.
____ 10. Hinting at something is an effective way of getting what you want.

Answers

__H__ 1. People have a hard time saying no.
__H__ 2. Paying attention to the status of the communicator is as important as the message itself.
__L__ 3. The message is more important than the status of who communicated it.
__H__ 4. Business is conducted only after enough time is taken for talking about family, your health, important politics, etc.
__L__ 5. People get down to business right away and often omit any "small" talk.
__L__ 6. It is alright to say "I disagree" to your professor in class.
__H__ 7. Use of intermediaries or go-betweens is common.
__H__ 8. "I don't understand" is often used to voice disagreement.
__L__ 9. If you want something, it's best to come out and ask for it.
__H__ 10. Hinting at something is an effective way of getting what you want.

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Eye Contact Survey

Find out how much eye contact you generally prefer and then think about the different situations listed below. For each situation indicate if you would use ***direct, casual, indirect, peripheral (side-ways glances)***, or ***none***. Then find out the same information for your host country.

Situation	How much eye contact do you prefer?	What is the preferred form of eye contact in your host country?
1. Chatting with friends		
2. Talking with a professor		
3. Interviewing for a job		
4. Giving a presentation		
5. Placing an order with a waiter		
6. Talking to your father		

Did you discover many differences between you and the host country? In which situations are they most pronounced?

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Personal Distance Survey

Think about how much personal distance you generally prefer and then think about the different situations listed below. For each situation indicate whether you would prefer to keep the ***normal amount of distance, greater than normal,*** or ***less than normal***. Then find out the same information for your host country.

Situation	How much personal distance do you prefer to use?	How much personal distance would be normal by host country persons?
1. Chatting with friends		
2. Talking with a professor		
3. Interviewing for a job		
4. Speaking to a child		
5. Placing an order with a waiter		
6. Talking to your father		

Did you discover a lot of difference between you and the host country? In which situations are they most pronounced?

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Touching Behavior Survey

Think about how much touching behavior is appropriate in your culture, under what circumstances, and with whom. Then consider the different situations mentioned below. For each situation indicate whether some kind of touching would be appropriate. Then find out the same information for your host country.

Situation	Is touching appropriate for you in the following situations?	Is touching appropriate in these situations for host country persons?
1. Chatting with friends		
2. Talking with a professor		
3. Meeting with your boss		
4. Speaking to a child		
5. Talking to your father		

Did you discover a lot of difference between you and the host country? In which situations are they most pronounced?

One of the best ways to learn what touching is appropriate for a certain culture is to observe people in how they greet each other. Do they hug or kiss? How many times? In France, people who are close kiss each cheek twice. In Latin America, hugging and sometimes kissing is more common. A handshake is more common in Germany and Northern Europe. In Japan, touching or other public displays of affection, even among close acquaintances, are generally not very common.

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Nonverbals Used in Host Country Greetings

Try to figure out what are the most common gestures, including touching, for the following situations. You may have more than one answer. Ask someone from the culture if you're not sure of the answer.

Type of encounter	Common type(s) of nonverbal greeting in the host country
Meeting someone of the same age and sex for the first time	
A man greeting his wife at home	
Two professional women meeting for lunch	
Two adult male friends meeting at a bar	
A brother greeting his sister at the airport	
A child greeting his father as he arrives home from work	
A young woman meeting her boyfriend in the park	
Two women seeing each other at a high school reunion	

Was there a lot of variation in the types of possible greetings based on age, gender, or relationship? What differences do you notice in how people greet each other in the U.S. and in the host country? When you greet someone in the same situation what do *you* tend to do?

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A Thoughtful Return

Some of you may experience exactly what Julie did. It's the reality of the fast-paced world in which we live. Since time upon re-entry may be scarce, we encourage you to record here or in your journal your thoughts on these questions to prepare you for returning home:

1. In what ways have I changed?

2. In what ways might my friends and family have changed?

3. How would I like my family and friends to treat me when I return home?

4. What am I looking forward to the most? The least?

5. What are the lessons I have learned that I never want to forget?

6. What are some skills I have learned?

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7. Many say that re-entry shock is more challenging than initial culture shock. What are some things I might do to make the transition easier? (See next section for suggestions from other students.)

8. What have been the important things about this study abroad experience that I want to share with family and friends?

9. What do I want to do with the experiences I've had (e.g., continue studying the language)?

Coming home is for many much more of a challenge than going to a foreign culture. Students need to be aware of this. I don't think it is emphasized as much as the culture shock going over, and I think it should be, at least as much if not more so. This is where it all falls into place, or begins to. My suggestion? Keep writing a journal – a lot of reflection is necessary to truly get the most out of it all. ~ A. J. Fleming, Spain

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Reacting to the Changes

Returning to one's home environment isn't easy for a number of reasons, including how much you have changed, how much you understand these changes, and how much your friends and family accept these changes. It's important to take time to consider what the particular frustrations are for you. Either in this guide or in a separate journal, record your reactions to these questions and statements.

1. I know that I have changed as a result of my experience because...

2. My friends do seem to understand_____about me, but they don't understand...

3. My re-entry experience would be better if...

4. Now that I am home, I worry most about...

5. The one thing I know I have learned about myself is...

6. I wish I could explain to my family and friends that...

While home may have remained fairly unchanged in your absence, it's possible that there have been some significant changes – a move, a divorce in the family, or a change to a new university. If you have changed and home has changed, it's almost like you need to learn how to dance together again. Will you vary the music to adapt to the new rhythms of your lives or play the same tune?

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Seeing the U.S and the World in a New Light

You have probably changed your views on a number of things since you came back. Many students have a new awareness of politics and the interpretations they get from the media of different countries and cultures. Some people feel either more highly critical of their own country or very grateful for the things that they enjoy in their own country – or both. To sort through your changing perspectives, jot down a few ways in which your views have changed. Here are a few questions to get you thinking. Write your responses in the following chart:

1. What new experiences did you have while abroad that shocked or surprised you about the world?
2. How do you feel now about those experiences after returning to the U.S.?
3. Are there certain stereotypes that you have let go of? kept? modified?

How my views of the world have changed	How my views of my own country and culture have changed

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Pre-Departure Listening Activities

To me, the number one project for pre-departure would be EXPOSE YOURSELF TO THE LANGUAGE (which I did not do enough)! Rent movies. Go to conversation groups. Figure out how to get a host country radio station over the Internet. Order books-on-tape in the target language through interlibrary loan. (Or better: ask your language teachers. They probably have stuff.) I'm sort of ranting because the one aspect of my German that is the most frustrating is the inability to understand speech. ~ Molly Zahn, Germany

In getting ready to go to Malaysia, I had great plans to study the language before leaving. But working to pay for the trip and studying for the heavy course load I had were all that I could manage! Before leaving, I did review some basic grammar and pronunciation. People had told me that I would be able to get by with English. They were right, I could get by with English. But even better than getting by, I was also able to learn some Bahasa Malaysian and some Cantonese from friends I met in-country. Being open to the language and the basics that I reviewed before departing made a big difference. ~ Barbara Kappler, Malaysia

1. Listen to radio from your host country over the Internet. You will need:
   - an Internet connection,
   - a media player plug-in for your Web browser, and
   - a site with live content in the target language. You can find good sites simply by launching a browser and searching for keywords such as "international radio" or the language you are interested in and the word "radio."

2. Form a group to watch foreign films (ones that are not dubbed into English) in the target language. Listen to the movies while taking into account the strategies suggested in this section.

3. Find tapes or CDs of music recorded in the foreign language and try to understand it not only for its words, but also for its meaning. Being familiar with popular music and musicians from the country also gives you something to talk about with new friends.

4. If available, go to a local market where they speak your target language and eavesdrop on common conversations about the prices of meat or the quality of the produce. Listen to the grocer give directions to someone on where to find a particular item in the store.

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Post-Study-Abroad Listening Activities

Keep the momentum going

Here are some things recent returnees did to keep up their listening skills:

- *I did something I was scared to do before leaving. I was much more confident, so I got a language conversation partner.*
- *Once a week I get together with friends and see a French film, have French food, and speak French.*
- *I got a job at a Mexican restaurant so I can use my Spanish.*
- *I bought CDs – from both the U.S. and my host country – on the Internet.*
- *I stay in touch with friends from there and continue to build my relationships.*
- *I visited again.*

Keep an open mind to opportunities for target language listening, but do proceed respectfully: Approaching a native speaker of the target language back in the U.S. may not be as easy as it had been in the environment of the foreign country. Be cautious about how you approach them, the language you use, and when the right time is to open a conversation.

Do not expect that a native speaker of your target language will want to speak anything other than English. After all, they may be in the U.S. specifically to learn English and the culture of the U.S. Approach them carefully, expressing your interest in their native language and culture; in most cases they will respond favorably.

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Pre-Departure Vocabulary Learning Activities

Want to impress your fellow travelers with your language skills? Do you have visions of saying just the right thing when you meet your host family? Or do you just want to know you can keep up your end in a basic conversation? You'll want to brush up on your vocabulary so that when you arrive you won't be groping around for important words. Here are a few things you can do before you go:

- Make a list of the words you expect to need often. Make flash cards or put these in your journal so you can review them every day.
- Purchase sets of ready-made flash cards available at student bookstores and online (just search for the language you want and "flash cards"). Tip: Often the ready-made sets of cards include extra information about the words, such as the forms for the verbs in different tenses.
- Spend time with native speakers and have them provide you with crucial vocabulary you might not know. You will need to tell your partner what situation you need vocabulary for, such as calling a museum to get information about hours. Then your partner will be able to walk you through a mock conversation.
- Make a commitment to learn ten new words a day.
- Discover materials that you can read online. Look for newspapers, magazines, articles about your hobbies, etc. in your target language.
- Think of yourself as a natural topic of conversation and learn how to talk about *you*. People in your host country may be quite curious about you, or the conversation may turn to you simply as a cultural expression of politeness. Either way, it will be helpful, especially when you first arrive, to know some ready statements about yourself. Potential conversation topics may include:
  - **Your basic activities in the host country:** What are you doing there? Studying economics at the local university? Researching the traditional fiber arts of the area? Learn the correct words and phrases needed to express these activities.
  - **Your living situation in the host country:** What city or region of the country are you in? Do you have a host family? Are you sharing an apartment with other students? Are you living in a dormitory?
  - **Your length of stay in the host country:** When did you arrive? How long will you stay? Will you travel? What do you hope to see or do?
  - **Your life in the U.S.:** Where are you from in the U.S.? Are you a student? Do you work full-time? What do you do for recreation/fun in the U.S.?
  - **Your family:** Where is your family? Do you have brothers and sisters? Are you married? Do you have children?

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How Do You Learn Vocabulary?

The first step in helping you to improve your vocabulary-learning strategies is to recognize how you actually go about learning new words.

Let's suppose that you are learning the Aymara language, which is spoken in parts of Bolivia and Peru. We picked this language precisely because the odds are small that you are studying Aymara. In the following activity we are asking you to think about what you do to learn new vocabulary and not just recall words you might already know.

The activity involves learning 10 words from Aymara. It may take you 5 to 10 minutes to complete. If you don't have time to learn 10, then try 5 – the idea is to practice learning words.

Pretend you have just finished reading about a young man who is hospitalized with an infection in his leg. His new girlfriend brought flowers to his hospital bed but found him sleeping, so she wrote him a note and left quickly.

Learn the words below so when given the English equivalent, you can produce the Aymara word. Pay attention to how you learn each word. After you feel you have put these words to memory, continue reading this section so you separate yourself from the vocabulary for a moment. Do not refer back to this list until asked to do so.

AYMARA	ENGLISH
wayna[1]	young man
usuta	sick
cayu	leg
machaka	new
aca	this
pankara[2]	flower
ucampisa	but
iquiña	to sleep
kellkaña[3]	to write
laka	quickly

The words selected come from Bolivian Aymara and conform more or less to the sound system of Spanish. Aymara belongs to the same language family as Quechua and is spoken by about 600,000 people in Bolivia and Peru.

---

[1] There are three main vowel sounds in Aymara; *a*, *i*, and *u*. The *a* is pronounced like the *a* in "father" as in the Aymara word *laka*. The *i* sound is somewhere in between the *i* in "bit" and the *ee* in "beet." In some Spanish loan words, the *i* can sound more like an *e*, which is pronounced like the *ay* in "hay." The *u* is pronounced somewhere in between the *oo* in "boot" and the *oo* in "look." The *u* can also sound like the *o* in "rope." A common Aymara diphthong is the *ay* like in *cayu* where the *ay* is pronounced like "eye."

[2] In Aymara, *r* is pronounced like the middle consonants in "butter" and is not rolled or trilled.

[3] In Aymara, *c* and *qu* are pronounced like the initial consonant in "kiss" and *k* is pronounced like the initial consonant in "cool."

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Much language learning is unconscious or at a low level of consciousness. If you become aware of the actual processes you use, you will gain insights about learning strategies that work for you and those that do not.

For example, you may be a person who thinks that repeating a word over to yourself a number of times will fix the word in your memory, and yet in reality this approach may not work well for you. Remember that just because you have used an approach to vocabulary learning for awhile, it doesn't necessarily mean that it's the best for you or best for learning these particular words. So it may pay to take the time to see what other approaches are out there, for the opportunity to see if something else works better. For example, you may not be aware of how greatly you benefit from seeing a visual image of words or concepts.

Sometimes we use a certain approach to vocabulary learning not because it works, but because we think that we should be able to learn that way. Perhaps we use it because we know it works for someone else because a teacher once told us to do it that way, or because we did it that way once and it worked then. For instance, you may once have kept an alphabetical listing of target language words and their native language equivalents, not because this listing genuinely contributed to your vocabulary learning, but because it seemed like the appropriate thing to do since other students were doing it.

Now, without looking at the original list, supply the Aymara word:

thi	_____
flower	_____
leg	_____
but	_____
young man	_____
to write	_____
new	_____
sick	_____
quickly	_____
to sleep	_____

Note that for this exercise you were asked to perform what is considered to be the more difficult vocabulary learning task – producing a target language word when given the native language equivalent. The intention is to help you see how you learn vocabulary when it is not easy to do so.

Compare with the original list to see how many you got right. Can you retrace the process of how you learned each word?

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Below is the list of Aymara words with a choice about how you learned each word. Learning vocabulary by *rote memory* refers to repeating the word orally or writing it down a few times without attempting to link it to something else. *Using an association* refers to any relationship you might have made between the word and something else. For example, *usuta* (sick) could be linked to used up (someone who is sick is used up). Note that it's common to initially assume that rote memory was used, so think carefully about how you really remembered the word.

	Got it Right	**Used Rote Memory**	**Used an Association**
wayna (young man)	_____	_____	_____
usuta (sick)	_____	_____	_____
cayu (leg)	_____	_____	_____
machaka (new)	_____	_____	_____
aca (this)	_____	_____	_____
pankara (flower)	_____	_____	_____
ucampisa (but)	_____	_____	_____
iqu'ña (to sleep)	_____	_____	_____
kellkaña (to write)	_____	_____	_____
laka (quickly)	_____	_____	_____

Now take a look at the Aymara words that you produced correctly. What strategy worked best for you – rote memory or association?

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Association Techniques

Technique	Description	Example	Explanation
Native Sound	Link to a sound in your native language	Aymara = *pankara* (flower) English = pancake	Think of a pancake-shaped flower
Target Sound	Link to a sound in the target language	Hebrew = *cosher* (aptitude) Hebrew = *kasheh* (difficult)	Something that is difficult takes aptitude
Another Sound	Link to a sound in another language	Korean = *sulsa* (diarrhea) Spanish = *salsa*	Salsa sounds like sulsa and salsa could lead to diarrhea (the goal is to learn; the means can be some novel link)
Meaning of the Parts	Pay attention to the meaning of part of a word	German = *frühstuck* (breakfast) German = *früh* (early)	Think that an early meal means breakfast
Structure	Take the word apart and make a connection to a word you already know in that target language	Hebrew = *mithalek* (divides up) Hebrew = *mahlaka* (department)	Dividing up an academic faculty into different departments
Category	Place the word in a topic group in the target language	Hebrew = *mitsta'er* (am sorry) Hebrew = *mevakesh slicha* (ask to be excused) Hebrew = *mitnatsel* (apologize)	Group these three expressions for apologies and then you can compare and contrast their meanings and functions
Visualization	Picture the word in isolation or in written context	Spanish = *ojo* (eye)	
Situation Link	Link the word to the situation in which it appeared (e.g., a song or poem you heard it in or some encounter where the word came up)	Korean = *seol-tang* (sugar) English = cappuccino and coffee shop	You remember the word for sugar because you learned it in the coffee shop when there was too much sugar in your cappuccino
Physical Sensation	Associate some physical sensation to the word	French = *triste* (sad) English = feel sad Japanese = *ichi* (one) and *ni* (two) English = *itchy knee*	You feel sad because of the tone of voice with which the word is said Think of an itchy knee. Maybe you even scratch your knee to recall these words

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Technique	Description	Example	Explanation
Mental Image	Create a mental image or picture that you associate with the word through the keyword and its meaning	*A Korean student remembered "you betcha" in English by thinking of calling someone a "cabbage head."* *Baechu = cabbage*	Think of agreeing with what that cabbage head has just said
Free Association	Free associations that are specific to your life experiences and reactions to the words	Arabic = *arjuli* (leg) English = your friend, Julie	You think of Julie having long legs in conjuring up the Arabic word, or if you hear the word, it reminds you of Julie and then of her long legs.
Enjoyable Sound	You remember a word simply because you enjoy the sound it makes	Estonian = *rõõma* (joy) Spanish = *pupi lentes* (contact lenses)	One learner enjoys the elongated vowels and loves to say this word One learner remembered this because it sounded silly to her

Now let us take another look at the Aymara exercise. Check if you used an association and then record which association you used from the previous chart (native sound, target sound, etc.).

	Used an Association	**Which Type?**
wayna	_____	_____
usuta	_____	_____
cayu	_____	_____
machaka	_____	_____
aca	_____	_____
pankara	_____	_____
ucampisa	_____	_____
iquiña	_____	_____
kellkaña	_____	_____
laka	_____	_____

Practicing word association strategies

Select 10 words you want to learn from your target language. Record these and their English equivalent here:

	New Vocabulary	**English Equivalent**
1.	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____

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6. _____ _____
7. _____ _____
8. _____ _____
9. _____ _____
10. _____ _____

Jump ahead and write the English word again on the next page, before you start memorization. Scramble the order to make sure you haven't just memorized the words according to their position in the list.

When learning these words, try to use all the association techniques listed in the chart on page 185. Don't get too frustrated if you can't come up with an association; some words are easier than others. After you have learned these words, keep reading as you did in the last exercise. Again, do not look back at this list until told to do so.

Sometimes successful learning strategies are discovered in unusual ways. Here are two examples of language learners remembering new vocabulary using word association:

> *I had a funny experience when I returned from a weekend in a small city called Fréjus in southern France. Upon returning, I had dinner with my host mother, and she asked me about how my weekend went. I had gone to Fréjus to see a concert of my favorite band and was trying to tell her about it. I told her that there were many people in town and that I had a really good time. She was looking at me strangely and seemed confused. I continued to talk about the concert and suddenly she smiled, stopped me, and explained that I had mispronounced the word 'concert' and was instead saying 'cancer.' The only difference between the two words is in the vowel, and I had not pronounced it correctly. She thought I had been saying there was a lot of cancer in Fréjus and that lots of people were there because of cancer. I was embarrassed about it at first, but we joked about it and I felt a lot better. Of course, now I always remember the word for concert because I link it to the sound of cancer. It's also like using free association because I remember the whole story around learning this word and the correct pronunciation.*
> *~ Sarah Parr, France*

> *When first learning Estonian, I was a bit overwhelmed at needing to remember to add the word 'kas' when I wanted to ask a question. As a result, I found myself a bit obsessed with the word. Instead of asking my future mother-in law, 'kuidas elate' (how are you)? I asked her 'kas elate' (are you alive)? After her response of 'ja' (yes) instead of 'haisti' (fine), I realized my mistake. I now remember 'kas' is not the same as 'kuidas' because I picture myself holding the phone and asking the correct question! I think this free association will stay with me forever! ~ Barbara Kappler, Estonia*

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Now try to come up with the target language word for the English equivalent.

	English Word	Target Language Word
1.	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____
9.	_____	_____
10.	_____	_____

At this point check the original list and see how many of the words you got right. Below, indicate how you went about learning each word. See if there is any pattern to how you used associations.

	Got it Right	Used Rote Memory	Used an Association
1.	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____	_____
9.	_____	_____	_____
10.	_____	_____	_____

Take a minute to answer these questions:

- Note the words, if any, for which you did not come up with mnemonic associations. Is there any pattern to these words?

- What do you now know about how you learn vocabulary?

- Did you use more associations to learn this set of words?

- Did your performance on the memory task improve?

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Post-Study-Abroad Vocabulary Activities

Here are nine tips for continuing to learn new words once back home:

1. Write to friends. Challenge yourself to include two or three new words in each letter.
2. When reading, keep a notebook to write down words you don't know and review the words periodically.
3. Keep using flash cards. Set aside time to use them at least once or twice a week.
4. Learn all the words to a new song.
5. Rent a movie in your target language and learn new words by listening to the soundtrack while comparing with the subtitles.
6. Find a conversation partner who is a speaker of the target language. While you help this person with English vocabulary half of the session, the partner can help you with your vocabulary the other half.
7. Tape commercials from a TV or radio program in the target language and see which words you can understand and what the words reveal about the culture.
8. Volunteer to help in the community with recent immigrants speaking your target language. You may need to think globally here – if your language is French, for example, people from Vietnam, Ivory Coast, and others will often speak French.
9. Get involved with your university's language department, and write an article in your target language for a departmental newsletter.

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Pre-Departure Speaking Activities

You may think that it is best to wait until you are safely ensconced in your new environment to worry about really trying to speak the target language. Guess what? It may be less stressful if you start beforehand to "break the language barrier."

Some of you may be lucky enough to be at schools where there are programs designed to help you meet international or local students who speak the language you are learning. Or it may be that you live in an area that has a community of people who are native speakers of the language you are learning. In either case, you have a great opportunity to spend some time before you leave speaking the language with native speakers. Here are some useful suggestions from students who themselves have prepared to study abroad:

- Spend a day with a native speaker or group of speakers of the target language.
- Have a regular meeting with a conversational partner over coffee.
- Practice the language over the phone if you cannot meet in person.
- Offer a language exchange with international students on your campus – the internationals practice their native language with you in exchange for your help in improving their conversational skills in English.

If you don't know groups of students who speak the language you are trying to learn, try some of these strategies:

- Contact your school's study abroad office, language departments, or local community groups that are involved with international activities to locate native speakers of the language you are learning.
- If you are enrolled in a language class, you could ask if your instructor knows of opportunities outside of class to practice your new language.
- At the least, you'll want to speak up in class as much as possible!

The more time that you can spend practicing speaking, the better. Whenever and however you can, try to find opportunities to surround yourself with the target language. When you do this, you are allowing yourself to open up to the new language and lessen the "language shock" you may experience when you are in another country. If you don't have any of these opportunities available to you before departure, read on and discover strategies you can use once you have arrived in your host country.

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An Exercise in 'Getting What You Want'

The most frustrating situation is often when you need to request something specific from another person. Try your skills out for the following situations in the language and cultural context that you are dealing with:

Situation 1

Your family has decided to visit. There is no easy public transportation from the airport. You need to ask your host (friends or family) for a ride.

What would you say in your home country?	What rules/values/ differences might be involved in the target culture?	What would you say in the target language?

Situation 2

Your friend is often late to meet you to walk to school. You would like to walk together but are arriving late to class and don't feel comfortable. You want to ask your friend to arrive on time.

What would you say in your home country?	What rules/values/ differences might be involved in the target culture?	What would you say in the target language?

Situation 3

You found a cheap airplane ticket to visit friends in a neighboring city. In order to take the trip you need to ask your instructor for an extension on a paper due next week.

What would you say in your home country?	What rules/values/ differences might be involved in the target culture?	What would you say in the target language?

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Post-Study-Abroad Speaking Activities

The number one complaint from returnees is that friends and family are not so interested in hearing the details of their experience abroad. What is also frustrating is that you will have fewer opportunities to speak in the target language. You may even feel lost among your fellow Americans. To keep up your language skills and to feel connected to your study abroad experience, you need to find people to talk to.

Where do you find these language informants?

- Locate clubs on campus and in the community that promote your country of interest and target language.
- Use the Internet to find native speakers or people interested in conversational exchange. There are many great Web sites that allow you to have live chats with people living on the other side of the world.
- Check newspapers or the Internet for upcoming cultural events or celebrations of holidays such as the Chinese New Year. Attend other activities like foreign films or art exhibits that are specific to your country or region of interest, and actively seek out others with whom you can practice.

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Pre-Study-Abroad Reading Activities

Like to read poetry? Science fiction? Cookbooks? Whatever you like to read in English is the best thing to read in your target language before study abroad. Why? Because you'll have the motivation to read it! Here are a few tips for finding resources in your target language:

- Ask your language teachers.
- Check your university or local library's collection for subscriptions to international and national newspapers.
- Search the Internet using your host country's name as your keyword.
- Skim through the phone book for bookstores selling foreign books.
- Talk to a local native speaker for their suggestions.
- Ask fellow students, local native speakers, or your language teacher if you can borrow materials.
- Choose a dictionary that's best for you to aid in your reading practice.

Bilingual dictionaries (English to/from another language) can be misleading because there may not be direct equivalence between the English word and the word in the target language. **Monolingual dictionaries** (single language) can be more helpful in truly understanding the meaning of words, but then you need to be versed enough in the language to understand the definition!

Monolingual and bilingual dictionaries. There are some dictionaries that are both monolingual and bilingual in the same book, which solves the problem of either/or.

Electronic dictionaries make word retrieval quicker. Many electronic dictionaries allow you to store vocabulary you come across when you are out and about. You can review this vocabulary at your leisure, with the dictionary taking the role of flash cards.

Learner dictionaries. Such dictionaries may be more helpful to low-intermediate learners because they make some effort to use simplified language. Nonetheless, be prepared for them not to be simplified enough at times. A classic case is a learner dictionary of English that defined "to moor" as "to secure or fasten to the dock." The learner didn't know what "secure," "fasten," or "dock" meant, so the definition was useless! In this case, the learner needed also to look up the unknown words in the definition until she finally could understand the word "moor."

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Pre-Study-Abroad Writing Activities

Before you head off to a new world of writing in a second language, you might find it useful to get in a little practice. Who are the first people that you will meet in the new country? Who will you need to interact with the most when you first arrive? Most often, these people are your host family members, a supervisor, or a landlord. What will you say to them when you first meet them? What do you most want to tell them about yourself?

Since you may be very nervous, and a little tongue-tied, you might find it helpful to write a letter of introduction. This way you have the opportunity to tell them exactly what you want to say without leaving out a detail, and you also will be able to use the language correctly. If you are not sure how formal or informal to be in your letter, it may be best to err on the side of more formal. In general, the U.S. has a relaxed writing style (calling people by first name, using contractions, using incorrect grammar). In some languages, writing too informally may send a signal that you are not respectful of the recipient's status, age, etc.

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Post-Study-Abroad Writing Activities

When you return from a sojourn abroad, it may be difficult to continue practicing your writing skills. Here are a few quick ways to keep up your writing:

- Write a letter to your host family every so often – you may also be able to email them.
- Keep a short journal on aspects of your experience abroad that are particularly memorable by using your newly learned language skills.
- Continue writing about how your life has changed since the experience, and try to explain your feelings regarding these changes.
- If you are more fluent in the second language, find a local newspaper that is written in that language and send in an article. Take it through the writing processes and find someone to give you honest feedback on your writing. You might discover a talent you never knew you had!

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Helping the Student Through the Learning Cycle

Problem:	
Identifying the problem	I could:
Select a problem	I could:
Consider alternative solutions	I could:
Evaluate consequences of solutions	I could:
Select a solution	I could:
Execute a solution	I could:

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MAXIMIZING STUDY ABROAD

Program Professionals' Guide

Section VIII:
Resources for Program Professionals

Recommended Supplemental Resources

Practical Resources on Intercultural Education and Training

Fowler, S. M., & Mumford, M. G. (Eds.) (1995). *Intercultural sourcebook. Vol. I.* Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press. Fowler, S. M. & Mumford, M. G. (Eds.) (1999). *Intercultural sourcebook. Vol. II.* Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

These two volumes are among the very best in the intercultural field. Rather than being a collection of training activities, one of the strengths of these volumes is the inclusion of chapters by leading professionals that theorize about different training methods (e.g., role plays and simulations), training design, and intercultural research. There are also excellent activities for each of the training methods. The second volume has helpful chapters about instruments/inventories that can be used by trainers for diagnosis and assessment as well as a section on some of the less common, but promising, intercultural training methods (e.g., visual imagery).

Gochenour, T. (Ed.). (1993). *Beyond experience: The experiential approach to cross-cultural education.* Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

This is the second edition of an intercultural training favorite and includes chapters that describe intercultural training goals, approaches, and philosophy as well as many practical activities that trainers can use. The emphasis of this volume is on the experiential approach to intercultural training, and several chapters articulate this perspective.

Hess, D. (1997). *Studying abroad/learning abroad: An abridged edition of the whole world guide to learning.* Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

This volume provides an in-depth review of the culture-learning process and includes a set of well thought out practical applications that can provide support to any study abroad program.

Kohls, R. L., & Knight, J. M. (1994). *Developing intercultural awareness: A cross-cultural training handbook* (2nd ed.). Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

This is a very handy compendium of intercultural resources. The basic design of the book was to include excerpts from other works that would highlight key training concepts and approaches. Readers can then go back to the original sources for more information. A very useful text for entering into the field.

Kohls, R. L. (1996) *Survival kit for overseas living.* (3rd ed.). Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

Survival kit is a classic work filled with ideas to help sojourners manage their intercultural experiences. It is a very user friendly, self-study oriented text that provides readers with numerous activities and real-world examples to illustrate the author's

Landis, D., & Bhagat, R. S. (Eds.). (1996). *Handbook of intercultural training* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

This key volume, a major revision of the three-volume series published in 1983, is one of the most important intercultural training books available. The current edition, in the manner of the first, was intended to present state-of-the-art chapters by leading interculturalists who would be at the cutting edge of theory and practice, and it has been very well received. The volume is broad in scope, ranging from theory and ethics to design, methods and applications. The chapters are of uniformly high quality. These are highly recommended for trainers.

Seelye, H. N. (1994). *Teaching culture: Strategies for intercultural communication.* (2nd Ed.). Lincolnwood, IL: National Textbook Company.

This work, in its original 1977 edition, was one of the very first to explore ways to teach culture in the second language education context. Over the years it has been one of the more influential "culture" books in the language field. It provides the reader with numerous intercultural learning activities such as culture capsules and culture assimilators.

Seelye, H. N. (Ed.) (1996). *Experiential activities for intercultural learning.* Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

This is a very useful volume consisting of 32 separate learning activities written by leading intercultural trainers/educators. Ramsey's chapter on methodology provides an important foundation for reading, then utilizing these activities in training programs. The activities themselves are presented in great detail; information consists of the materials and amount of time needed to conduct them, training procedures, and follow-up resources. This is one of the best activities collections.

Singeles, T. M. (1998). *Teaching about culture, ethnicity, & diversity: Exercises and planned activities.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

This very useful volume is filled with self-assessment inventories and learning activities that can be used by trainers. Part I presents the more elaborate learning activities such as cultural ethnography. The exercises in Part II illustrate how culture differences and intercultural contact influence behavior. Ethnic identity, stereotypes, and perceptions are explored by the chapters in Part III. Part IV concludes the volume with activities that help learners understand how culture influences world view and perception. Detailed instructions are given for how to use these activities.

Storti, C. (1999). *Figuring out foreigners: A practical guide.* Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

Storti, C. (1997). *The art of coming home.* Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

Storti, C. (1990). *The art of crossing cultures.* Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

Written by one of the best known authors in the intercultural training field, the three Storti volumes are excellent practitioner works that present key intercultural transition and adaptation ideas to the readers in an eminently readable fashion. Filled with wonderful examples, these volumes can be used effectively by trainers in programs as well as by sojourners in a self-study context.

Theoretical Resources on Intercultural Communication and Competence

Axtell, R. (1991). *Gestures: Do's and taboos of body language around the world*. New York: Wiley.

Axtell, R. (1959). *The silent language*. Reprint, New York: Anchor/Doubleday 1973.

Axtell's writings, like Edward T. Hall (see below), have illuminated our understanding of subtle communication mechanisms embedded in nonverbal codes such as gestures. He explores in theoretical and practical ways how these vary across cultures and the impact of these cultural differences.

Hall, E. T. (1976). *Beyond culture*. Reprint, New York: Anchor/Doubleday, 1983.

Hall, E. T. (1966). *The hidden dimension*. Reprint, New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1969.

Hall's works are among the theoretical classics in the field and "must reads" for those interested in the intellectual origins of intercultural education and training. Hall deconstructed culture in ways that revealed its power to influence human perception, communication, and interactions.

Kim, Y. Y. (1988). *Communication and cross-cultural adaptation: An integrative theory*. Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.

Kim, Y. Y. (2001). *Becoming intercultural: An integrative theory of communication and cross-cultural adaptation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Kim is one of the leading communication scholars in the intercultural field, and these are two of her best works on the theme of cross-cultural adaptation.

Paige, R. M. (Ed.). (1993). *Education for the intercultural experience*. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

This volume of readings is one of the best theory texts in the field and is a basic primer for the intercultural trainer. Included in this work are very useful chapters on intercultural sensitivity (M. Bennett), trainer competencies (Paige), cultural marginality (J. Bennett), study abroad (LaBrack), and cross-cultural adaptation (Grove and Torbiörn, Weaver).

Samovar, L. A., & Porter, R. E. (Eds.) (1999). *Intercultural communication: A reader* (8th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Perhaps the most popular intercultural textbook ever written, the *Reader* is now in its 9th edition and continues the tradition of presenting readings that cover a wide range of intercultural topics.

Stewart, E. C., & Bennett, M. J. (1991). *American cultural patterns: A cross-cultural perspective*. Rev. ed. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

This is a contemporary classic on American culture as viewed through the intercultural lens. American cultural values such as individualism are juxtaposed with contrasting cultural patterns. This volume provides valuable insights into culture in general as well as American culture in particular. While being primarily conceptual in nature, it bridges theory and application by providing important ideas about culture that can be incorporated into the training content.

Practical Resources on Language-Learning Strategies

Brown, H. D. (2002). *Strategies for success*. White Plains, NY: Longman/Pearson Education.

A book for ESL learners covering the following in short chapters: the first two on learning style preferences, 3) right and left brain, 4) motivation, 5) self-confidence and lowering anxiety, 6) taking risks, 7) language-learning IQ, 8) L1 influence, 9) learning a second culture, 10) learning strategies, 11) group strategies, 12) test-taking strategies. Every chapter has a questionnaire to help learners get into the issues. Exercises are included for practicing language skills.

Chamot, A. U., Barnhardt, S., El-Dinary, P. B., & Robbins, J. (1999). *The learning strategies handbook*. White Plains, NY: Addison-Wesley Longman.

The book has three sections: Helping students learn – intro, metacognitive model of strategic learning, instructional framework; Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) strategies step by step – preparation, presentation, practice, evaluation, expansion; From theory through practice – theoretical background and research on learning strategies, language learning strategies lessons (20 of them). In the research section, there is a review of intervention studies of learning strategies instruction – covering studies on vocabulary, listening, reading, speaking, and writing strategies, as well as strategies for content-based ESL (using the CALLA program).

Cohen, A. D. (1998). *Strategies in learning and using a second language*. Harlow, Essex: Longman.

This volume distinguishes language learning from language use strategies, describes research methods for investigating these strategies, and then presents ground-breaking research that links the use of strategies on specific tasks with language performance on those tasks. The book then considers the language of thought chosen by multilingual learners and introduces cutting-edge studies investigating the languages used for performing cognitive operations. In addition, the volume deals with strategies that learners select for coping with language tests, quizzes, and other measures of their language ability, and provides empirical research probing the use of test-taking strategies.

Ehrman, M. E. (1996). *Understanding second language learning difficulties*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

This book is directed at classroom teachers and primarily at those who have students who are not performing well. The emphasis is on diagnosing their students' learning patterns and determining the sources of difficulties in learning an L2. She focuses on learning styles, affective factors, and learning strategies. Her case studies are of late teenagers and adults. There are about 35 cases mentioned, most working on FLs but some on ESL. She discusses how to do observations (Ch. 2) and interviews (Ch. 3). She then deals with cognitive learning styles (Ch. 4); field independence and field sensitivity (Ch. 5); personality models (Ch. 6); the affective dimension: motivation, self-efficacy, anxiety (Ch. 7); and background factors and learning strategies (Ch. 8). Ch. 9 is about putting together the information from questionnaires, tests, and language aptitude instruments. Ch. 10 looks at students in context. Ch. 11 is about when outside help is needed, and it ends with teachers helping students on their own (Ch. 12).

Dörnyei, Z. (2001). *Motivational strategies in the language classroom*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

A book that looks at the basic motivational conditions, generating initial motivation, maintaining and protecting motivation, and encouraging positive self-evaluation. The book provides a practical approach to teaching motivational strategies in the language classroom – with more of an emphasis on what teachers need to do to motivate students than on what students themselves can do to become better motivated.

Oxford, R. L. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

The most famous of the strategy books, Oxford's text contains two versions of the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), which has been translated into several foreign languages and provides learners with a hands-on method to self-diagnose their language-learning strategies. The book contains extensive examples of how different strategies can be applied across language skills and tasks. This is a very practical resource for language teachers and strategy teacher-trainers.

Rubin, J. & Thompson, I. (1994). *How to be a more successful language learner (2nd ed.)*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

This popular and easy-to-read book provides numerous concrete suggestions for how learners can become more independent, effective, and successful in their attempts to learn foreign languages. Divided into two parts, the book introduces learners to the nature of the language learning process and then provides step-by-step suggestions on how to improve vocabulary, grammar, reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills.

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"As a language teacher who prepares students for study abroad opportunities and occasionally leads trips, I have found both the guide for students and the companion guide for study abroad professionals to be invaluable. The students enjoy the activities, and I love the convenience of having everything in one easy-to-use book. I highly recommend both books for anyone who works with study abroad programs."

~ Carla Haywood,
high school Spanish teacher

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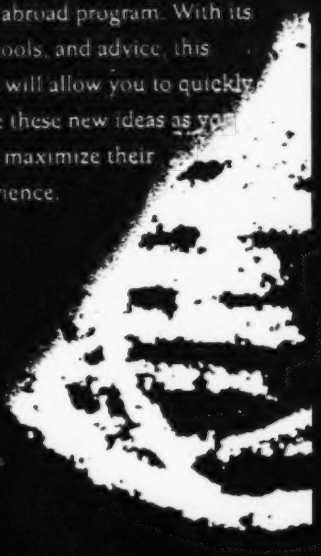
Maximizing Study Abroad

Program Professionals' Guide

As a study abroad professional, students look to you for guidance on how to get the most out of their time abroad. This unique guide integrates language and culture learning so you can help your students gain the tools they need to succeed while abroad. Created as a companion to *Maximizing Study Abroad: A Students' Guide to Strategies for Language and Culture Learning and Use*, this guide will provide you with a solid understanding of language and culture learning and concrete ways to use this knowledge to help students. The guide is written with the busy professional in mind and features a "tool kit" of hands-on activities that are ready for use in pre-departure, in-country, and re-entry initiatives for study abroad programs. The material can be easily adapted to meet the needs of any study abroad program. With its creative activities, tools, and advice, this user-friendly guide will allow you to quickly and easily integrate these new ideas as you help your students maximize their study abroad experience.



MAXIMIZING STUDY ABROAD

ISBN 0-9722545-1-X

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